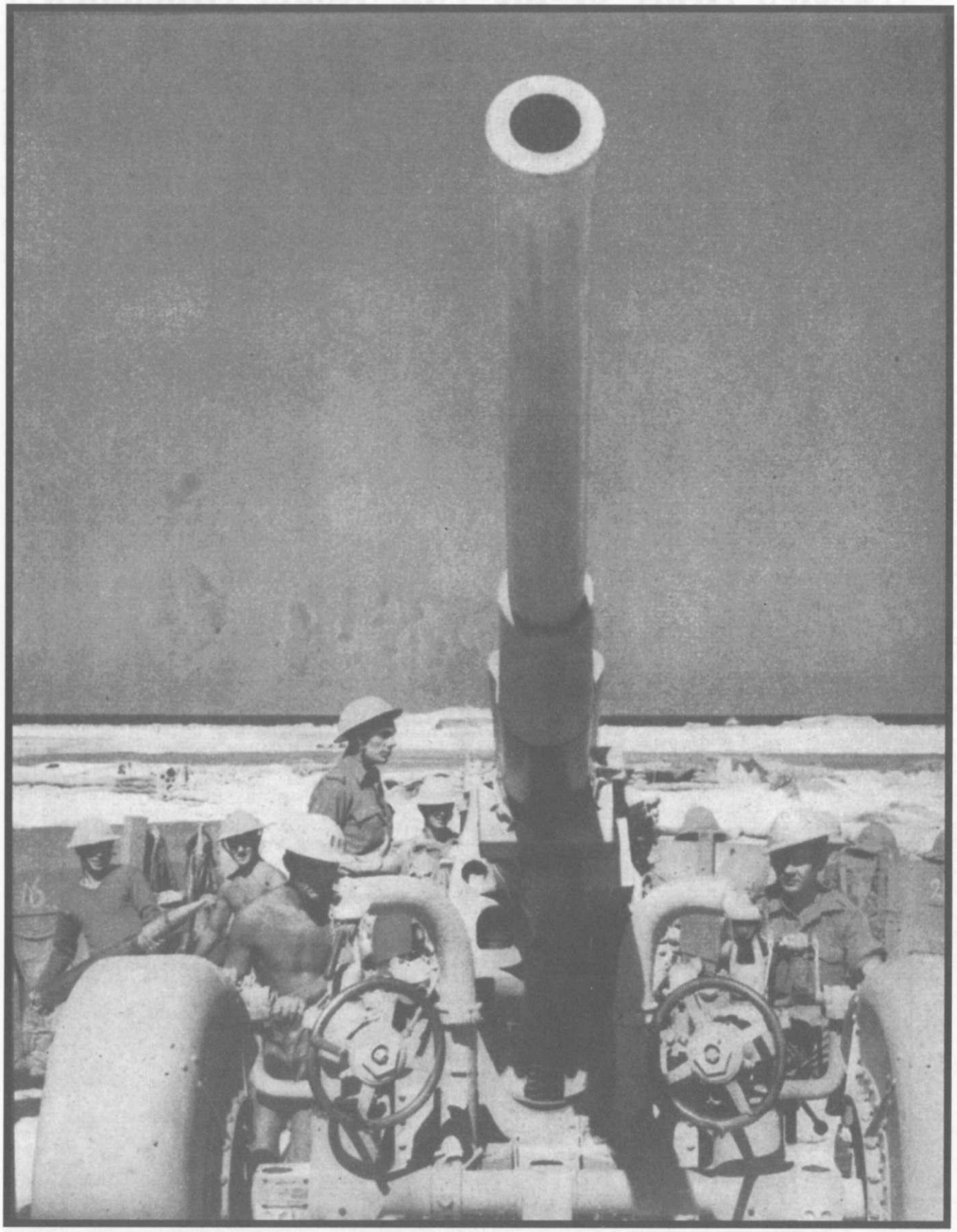


ONE OF THE GUNS THAT BLEW THE ITALIANS OUT OF EGYPT'S SKY

Anti-aircraft guns forming part of the western defences of Egypt have often been in action since Italy entered the war, and they helped to keep the sky clear of Italian raiders during Wavell's great offensive. One of the big guns is here seen on the coastline with its crew ready for action. The huge tires of the mounting help to prevent it from sinking into the sand. Such guns are very effective in desert warfare, for visibility beneath the glaring sun is usually good, and "cloud-dodging" is possible for attacking 'planes only on comparatively few days of the year.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Wavell's Army of the Nile Routs Graziani's

After months of waiting for a further move on Graziani's part, the British in Egypt delivered a sudden blow at the Italian invaders in the Western Desert of Egypt. Below we describe the opening phase of what was indeed a magnificent victory.

GENERAL SIR ARCHIBALD WAVELL, Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in the Middle East, leant crosslegged against his desk in his headquarters at Cairo. About him were grouped a number of British, American and Turkish correspondents, and to them he made this dramatic declaration: "Gentlemen," he said, "I have asked you here to tell you that our forces began to carry out an engagement against the Italian armies in the Western Desert at dawn this morning [Dec. 9]." Then he went on to describe how the British troops had begun their advance, and concluded by saying that already he had received word that one of the Italian camps had been taken.

The British offensive against Graziani had been most carefully planned and prepared, and it would have taken place earlier if, as Mr. Churchill pointed out in the House of Commons on December 10, the Italian invasion of Greece had not made it necessary for a considerable part of the Royal Air Force in Egypt to be dispatched to aid the Greek Army in their heroic defence of their native land. "The serious temporary diminution of our Air Force in Egypt," said Mr. Churchill, "made it necessary somewhat to delay the execution of the offensive plans which had been matured, and it was not until the beginning of this month that the Air Force in Egypt was once again in a position to afford the necessary support to a forward movement."

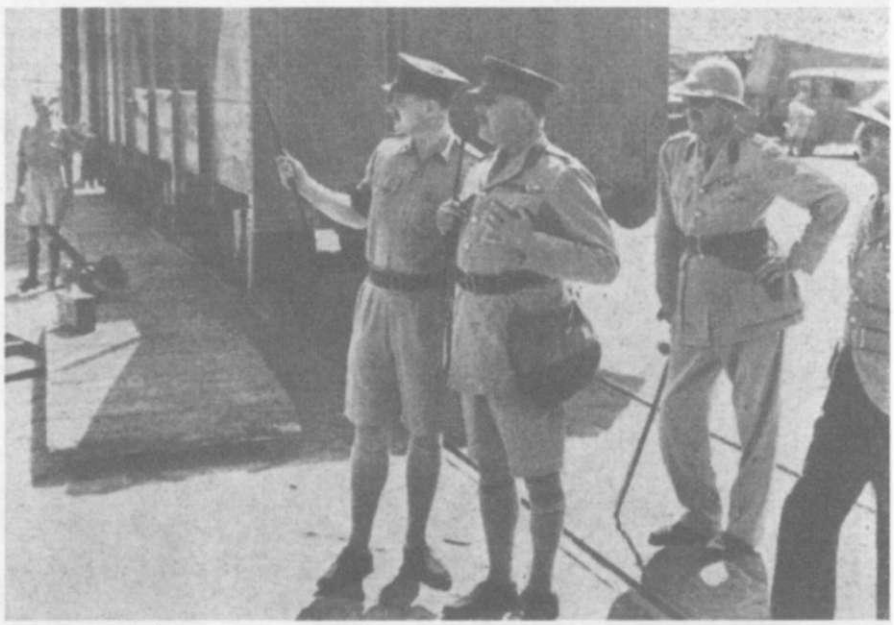
But the delay was employed to good advantage. Although the opposing patrols were in more or less daily contact, the main bodies of the British and Italian armies were separated by some 75 miles of desert, and the crossing of this barren and shelterless waste unobserved by the enemy presented a pretty problem. Most of the work was done at night. First, dumps of ammunition, petrol, food and military supplies of all kinds were brought up from the base and buried in the sands far ahead of the British lines. Again at night the British troops were marched ever nearer to the Italian positions, while during the hours of daylight they rested motionless, their khaki uniforms and camouflaged equipment fading imperceptibly into the dull brown of the desert. Even if the Italian 'planes had attempted a reconnaissance they might still have failed to spot the troops spread out below them, but in fact the skies were kept clear by the fighters of the R.A.F.

Then on the night of Sunday, December 8, the final stage began. By forced marches the British armoured columns, drawn from General Sir Maitland Wilson's Army of the Nile, were brought right up against the Italian outposts. They moved without lights with the utmost stealth and as quietly as might be, following the faint tracks scored in the sand, keeping their course by compass and helped on their way by the stars that glittered overhead. Long before dawn the guns and tanks and armoured cars were all in the positions allotted to them, and far away to the rear the signallers and engineers had completed the lines which linked them with their bases in Egypt.

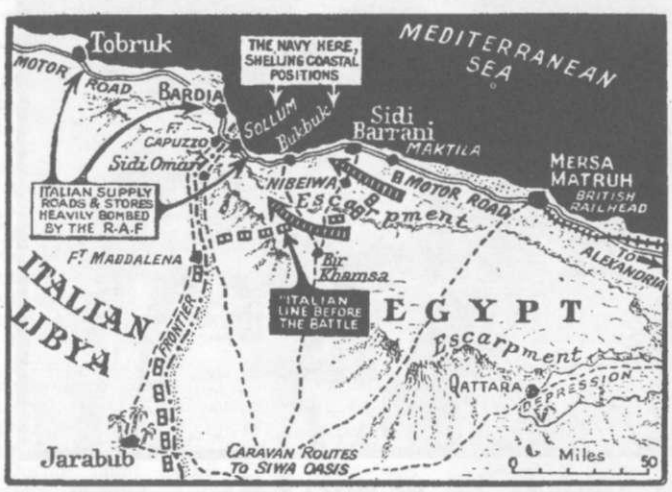
Some time before dawn on December 9 waves of British bombers went over on their way to plaster the Italian aerodromes. Dawn brought zero hour, and with a rush and a roar the British and Imperial troops, supported by a contingent of the Free French forces, went into action. Their first objectives were the forts or fortified camps, built of rock and concrete and defended by anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns as well as field artillery, which the Italians had established in the desert east and south of Sidi Barrani, that cluster of whitewashed mud hovels which was made the Italian advanced headquarters in September. The first of these forts to fall was Nibeiwa, 15 miles south of Sidi Barrani; here 500 prisoners and much war material fell into the hands of the British, while the Italian General was killed and his second-in-command captured. Later in the day another stronger and more important position nearer to the coast was attacked; again 500 prisoners and much material fell to the victors. At the same time other British forces reached the coast to the west of Sidi Barrani, thus threatening, indeed cutting, Graziani's communications with Buqbuq and Sollum.

In all these operations the British Mediterranean Fleet and the Royal Air Force cooperated closely with the army. British warships bombarded the Italian positions on the coast, in particular Sidi Barrani and Maktila, the little village some 15 miles to the east which marked the farthest point of Graziani's advance into Egypt.

Several communiqués told of the aid rendered by the R.A.F. On the night of Saturday, December 7, the Italian aerodrome at Castel Benito—named in honour of Mussolini, and the principal Italian Air Force depot in Libya—was heavily bombed, much damage being done to hangars, offices, ammunition and petrol dumps. Then on the two following days R.A.F. bombers attacked all the Italian aerodromes from Derna to Sidi Barrani, while the fighters—Hurricanes in the main—machine-gunned enemy troop concentrations and columns of



LT.-GEN. SIR HENRY MAITLAND WILSON is here seen (centre) watching the arrival of further military equipment in Egypt. He has been Commander-in-Chief in Egypt since 1939, and it was he who, at the head of troops drawn from his Army of the Nile, delivered the onslaught in the Western Desert which in the space of a few hours drove the Italians out of their carefully-prepared positions at Sidi Barrani and its protective screen of forts. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*



SIDI BARRANI, Graziani's advanced post in Egypt which was captured by the British on the afternoon of December 11, is situated on the Mediterranean coast, rather less than half-way between the Libyan-Egyptian frontier and Mersa Matruh. On this map arrows mark the direction of the British thrusts on December 9.
By courtesy of the "Daily Telegraph"

Where Our 'Victory of the First Order' Was Won

SOMEWHERE IN EGYPT Indian infantrymen, forming a part of the British Army in the Western Desert, take cover behind rocks when an Italian aeroplane drops bombs in their vicinity. Graziani's air arm was far superior in numbers to Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur M. Longmore's, but never for a moment did it assert its superiority—not even when numbers of R.A.F. 'planes were sent from Egypt to aid the Greeks. By the beginning of December the opportunity was lost, and henceforth it was the R.A.F. which did the bombing. Every Italian aerodrome, from Derna to Sidi Barrani, has been plastered time and again.

ITALIAN TROOPS are here seen taking cover at Sollum soon after they invaded Egypt on September 13. Three days later they reached Sidi Barrani, but from there they extended their hold only as far as Maktila, 15 miles to the east, and for two months Graziani devoted all his efforts to improving the coast road along which the advance had been made and laying down a water supply. Then, on December 9, the British struck, and in two days the Italians were driven out of positions which they had spent two months in consolidating. *Photos, Keystone*

Egypt Freed from the Threat of Invasion

transport wherever they were to be spotted. Particular attention was paid to the road along the coast, so that in a very short time it deserved still more its reputation of one of the world's worst; yet along this road, which Graziani made strenuous efforts to improve, all the Italian supplies and reinforcements had to move. Large fires were reported west of Buqbuq, and in many places enemy motor transport was seen to be burning on the road, adding to the dislocation of their troop movements. Twenty-two enemy aircraft were reported shot down or destroyed in the first day's fighting. Pausing only to refuel, the British aircraft attacked far and wide.

In a communiqué issued on December 10 G.H.Q. Cairo briefly reported that "operations in the Western Desert are successfully continuing. Prisoners so far captured are reported to exceed 4,000, also a number of medium tanks." Within 36 hours of the opening of the British offensive the British had driven a wedge between the Italian force at Sidi Barrani—report had it that it consisted of two divisions, principally of Libyan troops—and the main Italian army which was strung out along the road running through Buqbuq and Sollum into Libya. A number of the camps with which the Italians had dotted the desert had been stormed and the process of cleaning up enemy pockets was proceeding satisfactorily.

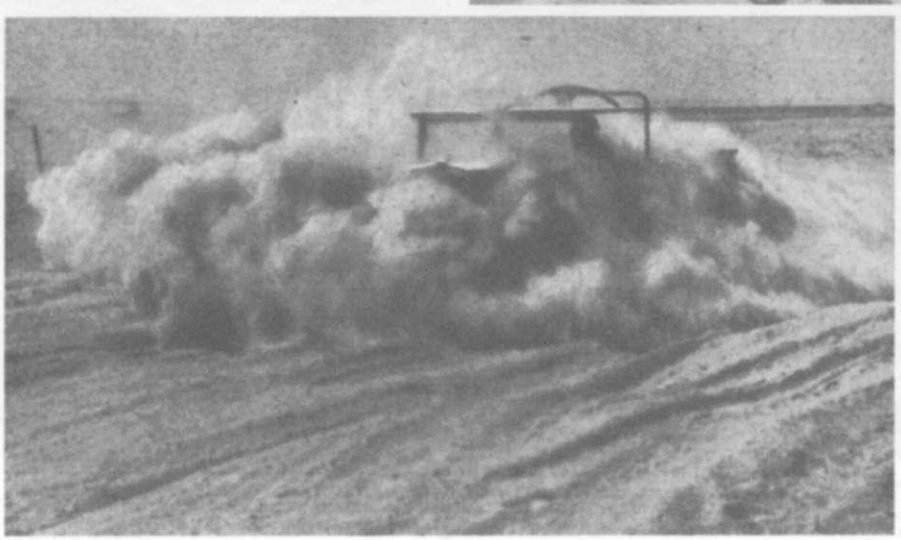
When Mr. Churchill addressed the House of Commons on December 10 he said that it was too soon to forecast either the scope or the result of the considerable operations which were in progress, but at least "the preliminary phase had been successful." He spoke with statesmanlike caution, but within a few hours the news flashed from Cairo emphasized his understatement.

A special communiqué issued from British G.H.Q. in Cairo on the night of December 11 stated: "This afternoon Sidi Barrani was captured, with a large number of prisoners, including three generals. Advance elements of our mechanized forces are now operating westwards, and considerable additional captures have been made." A little later a naval communiqué from Alexandria announced that: "During last night and today naval forces have been harassing the enemy retreating along the coast and bombarding enemy columns on the roads round Sollum." The number of prisoners taken mounted apace. The first figure was 1,000; then it was 4,000, then 6,000; then it jumped to 20,000 and over 30,000 with thousands more still pouring in, together with vast quantities of tanks, guns, and military equipment and supplies of every kind.

So that when Mr. Churchill again addressed the House on December 13 he was able to announce that the operations constituted a "victory of the first order"—one which removed all our anxieties for the defence of Egypt, so acute only three or four months ago. He spoke of the capture of Sidi Barrani and of the whole coastal region, with the exception of one or two points. "We do not yet know," he said, "how many Italians were caught in the encirclement, but it would not be surprising if at least the best part of three Italian divisions, including numerous Blackshirt formations, have been either destroyed or captured." Then he went on: "In the meanwhile the pursuit to the westward continues with the greatest vigour. The Air Force are bombing and the Navy are shelling the principal road open to the retreating enemy, and considerable additional captures have already been reported besides those which fell within the original encirclement." Thus, he concluded, "the British guarantee and pledge that Egypt would be effectively defended against all comers has been in every way made good."

So far from being a mere foray, as had been first suggested, the British attack was now revealed as an offensive on a large scale. Over the desert and along the coastal road the British swept on, driving the Italians before them. Only here and there were the enemy able to make a stand; at Sidi Barrani itself, for example, where Blackshirt detachments offered a tough but altogether unavailing resistance. From Buqbuq, taken on December 10, the British armoured columns continued their progress to the west. On the night of December 12 there came a report over the Turkish radio at Ankara that Sollum, too, had been taken.

This report was regarded as premature, but there was no doubt that Graziani's situation was critical. One after the other his ring of forts in the desert had been overrun, and the retreating Italians were forced to converge on the coast road which was under continual fire both from the sea and the air. At Sollum the coastal plain abruptly rises into the Libyan Plateau, and only two narrow passes connect the coast road of Libya with that which runs along the Egyptian shore. These passes were now packed with an indescribable medley of Italian troops; moving westwards was a great mass of wounded and fugitives, while in the opposite direction the motorized units which Graziani ordered up from Benghazi to reinforce his reeling front, endeavoured to push their way. The traffic jam was terrific, and while some of the Italians struggled to go forward and others strove to go back, all alike were exposed to a wellnigh continuous attack from the air, as the R.A.F. bombers came over and discharged their death-dealing loads. For in the air, as on the ground, the British were now indisputable masters.



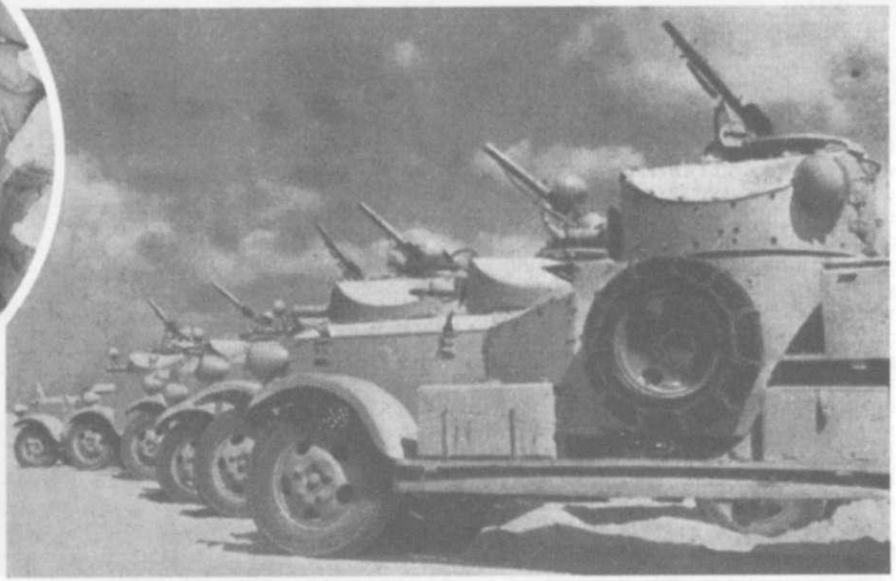
DESERT DUST is one of the adverse conditions that faced the British troops during their advance against the Italians. Above, the leaders of pack donkeys are ankle deep in it, while, left, a car makes its own smoke screen of sand.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Laying the Foundations of Victory in Libya

IN THE SANDS of the Western Desert deep-dug gun emplacements are almost an impossibility, and camouflage becomes of the greatest importance. Left is an example of cover that would hide the gun from the air. Above, Indian troops are learning to use "Molotov Cocktails," the mixture in bottles which hurled at a passing tank puts it out of action.

TROOPS OF THE INDIAN ARMY played a great part in holding the line against the Italians in North Africa. These riflemen of an Indian regiment are occupying a sandbagged position in the British first line.



THE R.A.F. is harassing the Italians not only from the air but on land as well, for it has an armoured car section now operating in the Middle East. Some of the formidable array of cars, above, have here been drawn up on the desert ready to start out on patrol.

THE INDIAN TROOPS had thorough training in the changed conditions of modern warfare before they went to the front. One of the things that they learned was how to deal with tanks. Left, men of a famous Indian regiment are advancing armed with light anti-tank guns.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

In Albania the Italians Retreated Still

While the British drove the Italians out of the positions they had so carefully consolidated in Egypt, their gallant allies, the Greeks, continued their victorious offensive in Albania. Below we review the developments following upon the capture of Argyrokastro.

WHEN in the first week of December the Italians were driven out of Argyrokastro, their principal supply base in southern Albania, they retreated across the mountains towards Tepelini, an important road junction on the way to Valona. At the same time the Italians who had been occupying Santi Quaranta on the sea coast withdrew northwards in the direction of Fort Palermo and Chimarà. But the first fell on Dec. 13, and Chimarà, too, was outflanked.

The Greeks kept in close touch with the Italian rearguard, although their advance was marked by a laudable caution. They knew, none better, that the enemy was strong in tanks and armoured cars, and they were careful to avoid giving him any opportunity of using them to any effect. In front of their marching detachments they flung a screen of cavalry, and they also made full use of their experience in mountain warfare, using precipitous paths which were quite inaccessible to the Italian mechanized transport.

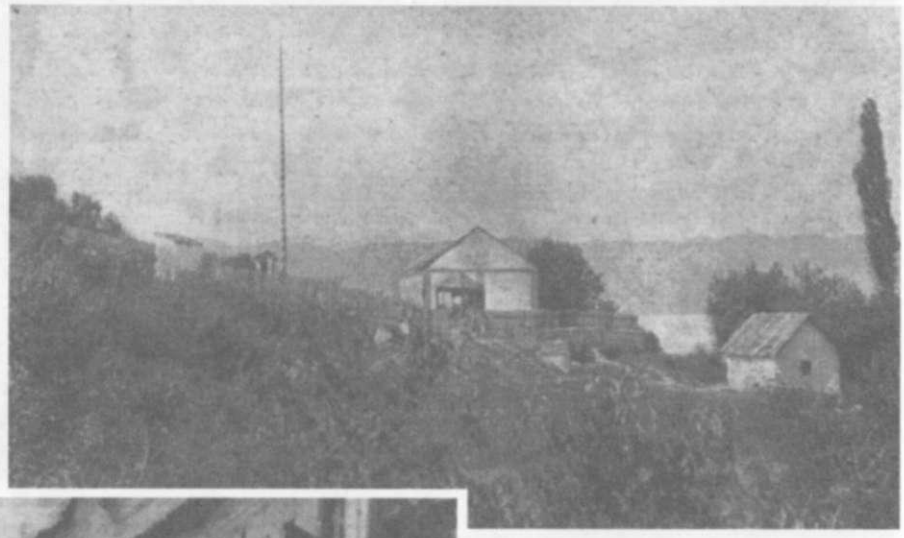
Inland, too, the Greeks gradually but inexorably drove the Italians before them until they were within range of Tepelini, whence it is only a matter of some 30 miles to Valona. Dispite the desperate efforts of the Italian Alpine troops, a number of villages were occupied by the Greeks, who by now had developed to a fine art their tactics of the offensive which proved as successful as economical in man-power. Usually they refrained from making a frontal assault, but gradually worked round on either side of the villages or towns which were their objectives until they occupied the heights, and so compelled the Italians down below in the valleys to choose between extermination or evacuation. Again and again these tactics proved their worth, and from place after place the Italians streamed away north or west, leaving behind them quantities of war material which they had not time to destroy.

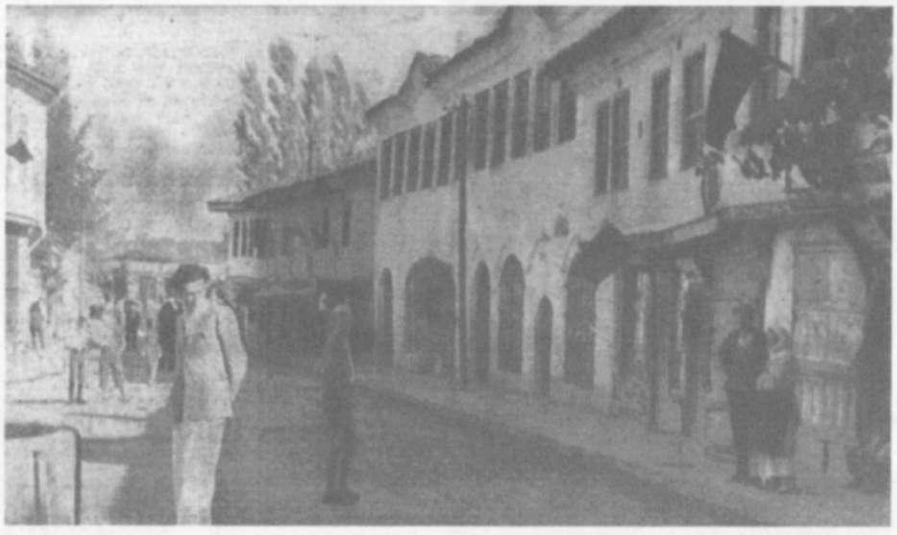
The Greek communiqués were masterpieces of concise statement. "Fighting

The objectives of the Greek advance into Albania from the south and the south-east are shown on this map by black arrows. On the coast the main objective is Chimarà (Himara). *By courtesy of the "Daily Express"*

continued successfully today," read the one issued on December 9; "we have advanced farther." Next day it was stated that "our offensive action continued with success along the whole of the front. Some strong positions were taken with the bayonet. The enemy suffered heavy losses. Three 100-mm. guns fell into our hands." Another 24 hours went by and the Greek G.H.Q. announced that: "Our advance continues in various directions of the front, despite violent enemy reaction. Much booty and many prisoners have fallen into our hands."

Klisura, a strongly fortified key-point in central Albania, was evacuated by the Italians on December 10, when the general advance of the Greeks was stated to have been greatly accelerated. The enemy were now not merely retiring but were literally in flight, and if more prisoners were not taken it was entirely due to the mountainous character of the region in which the battle was being fought. Then, on December 9, the day on which the British opened their offensive against the Italians in Egypt, a strong Italian column was annihilated in Northern Albania while defending strong positions on the mountain massif. The Greek mountain artillery got range and blasted the Italians from their positions. When the Greek infantry went forward to occupy the ground





POGRADETS (above), with the capture of which the whole area south-east of Lake Okrida was in Greek hands; this street scene in the little town is typical of Albania. The top photograph shows a frontier station on the boundary between Greece and Yugoslavia, across which Hitler may perhaps come to Mussolini's aid if his situation becomes desperate. *Photos, G. Bull*

they discovered several ravines full of Italian dead, and vast quantities of war material which had been left behind as the enemy fled.

By now the weather conditions had taken another turn for the worse. The cold was extreme; dense mist hampered the use of aircraft, and deep snow made it next to impossible to drag the heavy guns across the mountains. So severe was the weather that it was reported that the wolves had been driven from the heights to seek the comparative shelter of the valleys, where they were often encountered on the roads. In such conditions the highly mechanized Italian Army was at a serious disadvantage compared with the Greeks, whose transport was still almost entirely drawn by horse and mule. All the same, the Greeks were severely tried by the bitter conditions and they strove to penetrate into the valleys of the Devoli and Skumbi, where it was hoped milder conditions would be encountered. But this effort

From Triumph to Triumph the Greeks Press On

ARGYROKASTRO. This picturesque town, clambering up a hillside, was finally occupied by the Greeks on December 8. It was the main Italian forward base in South Albania. The enemy was vigorously shelled by the Greek forces from the mountains, seen in the background. *Photo, P. Luck*

brought them up against the main line of defence running through Tirana, Elbasan, Berat and Valona, which the Italians were feverishly fortifying and would obviously do their utmost to hold. For if that line were penetrated, even at one point, then the Italians would be compelled to abandon practically the whole of Albania and be driven to find a last line of resistance on the coast itself.

In spite of the unfavourable weather conditions, the Anglo-Hellenic Air Arm continued their attacks whenever possible. It was not long before Italy's last remaining aerodromes in Albania, those at Durazzo and Tirana, had been so bombed—not to mention several days of torrential rain—that they were reported to be no longer capable of being used. Valona, too, was raided time and again, munition dumps, buildings, and ships in the harbour receiving direct hits. So severe was the damage at this, Italy's chief "invasion port," that to an increasing extent the Italians were driven to make use of the roadstead of San Giovanni di Medua in the extreme north of Albania.

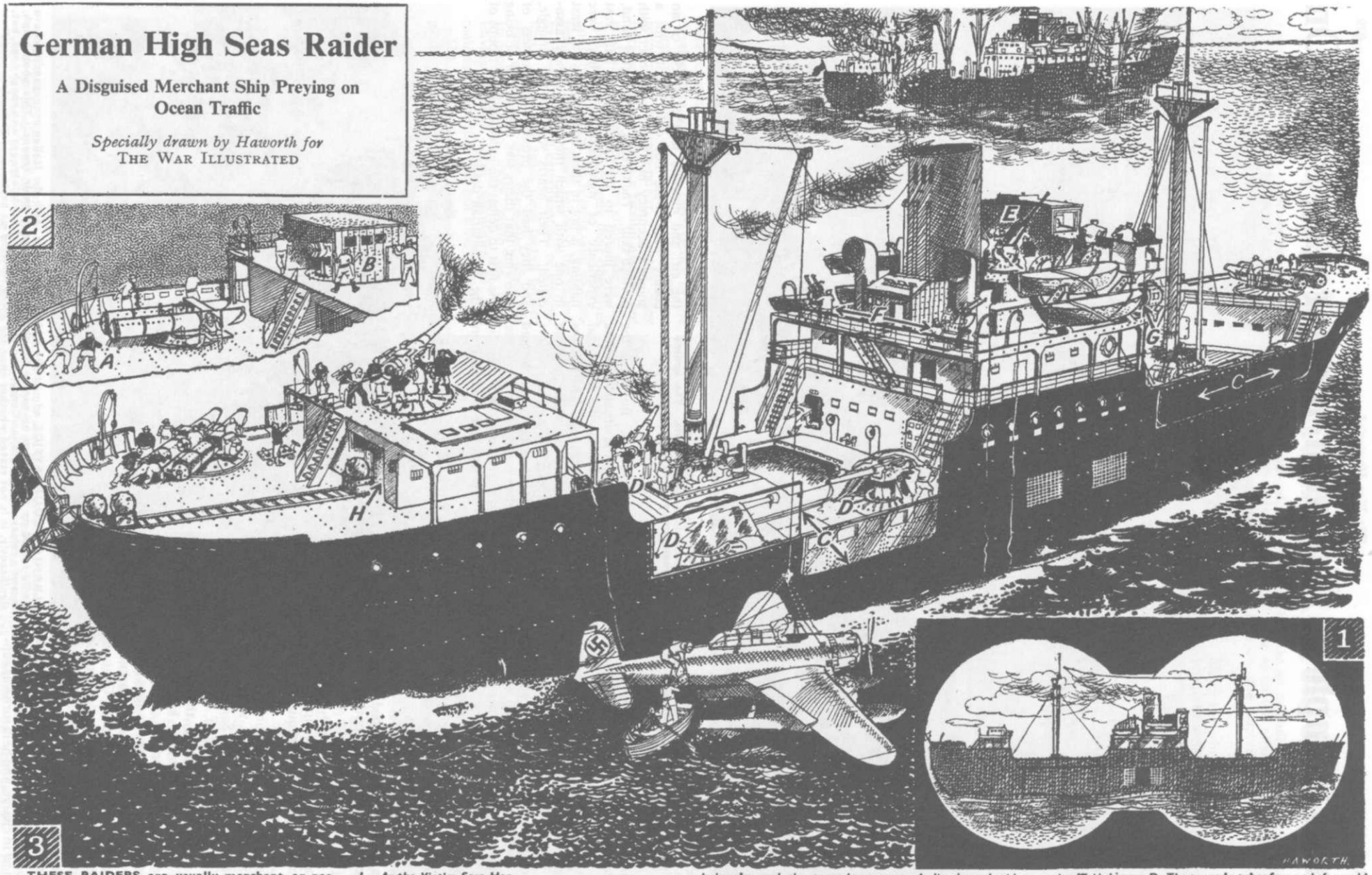
As the struggle developed there were reports of growing confusion behind the Italian lines. Prisoners spoke of disputes between the commanders of the various units, who endeavoured to shift on to one another the blame of the successive defeats. Changes in the High Command, too, had added to the difficulty of the situation. Not once but several times did Mussolini "swop horses in crossing the stream"; first General Prasca gave place to General Soddu; then Badoglio was said to be in charge, and he in turn was supplanted by General Cavallero. But one of the most important factors in the situation was the striking comparison between the individual quality of the troops engaged. The Italians were fighting for a cause for which they had no heart; they had been told by their officers to expect a triumphal parade, and instead they found themselves bogged in icy swamps, staggering through blizzards across mountain heights, bombed and machine-gunned from the air, and exposed to the attacks of an enemy who could not only shoot with a sniper's accuracy but wield a bayonet with devilish skill. The Greeks, on the other hand, were inured to the climate and had vast experience of mountain war; they were fighting, if not in their own country, at least in one with which they were closely associated. Their hearts were in the struggle, and they had the proud consciousness of knowing that theirs was the honour of being the first to defeat the much-vaunted troops of the Totalitarian despot.

ALBANIA'S COUNTRYSIDE admittedly makes hard going, and the Italian propagandists have gladly seized on the fact as an excuse for the dismal failure of their troops. This photograph, recently released by the Italian Censor, shows some of General Soddu's troops on a rough road, but, significantly, it is not stated whether they are going forward or back. *Photo, Associated Press*

German High Seas Raider

A Disguised Merchant Ship Preying on Ocean Traffic

Specially drawn by Haworth for
THE WAR ILLUSTRATED



THESE RAIDERS are usually merchant or passenger ships strengthened and heavily armed, but still retaining the superficial appearance of harmless vessels. Such ships are continually trying to slip out of Germany in order to take toll of our shipping and, if possible, to divert some of our warships to search for the raiders.

1. As the Victim Sees Her

The raider as she might appear to a merchant ship's captain through his binoculars. Naturally she would not fly the Swastika, but the ensign of a neutral country, changed from day to day.

2. The Raider Approaches

The torpedo tubes of a raider are hidden behind high bulwarks, and the torpedo gunners, A, lie down beside them until the moment for action. The crew of the 5·9-inch gun—concealed in the dummy after deckhouse, B—stand by.

3. Disguise is Dropped

When the victim is near enough the heavy metal false plating, C, is dropped to expose, at port or starboard, a pair of 5-inch guns, D. The torpedo tubes fore and aft would be used only in an emergency. The A.A. gun, E (concealed as a deckhouse), and several batteries of machine guns, F, complete the armament. Searchlights, G, are mounted beneath the captain's bridge. The aircraft would be stored partly dismantled in the hold. Some 300 mines stored below, are brought up in a small lift, H, and run along a set of lines on the deck ready for laying.

Martinique: Vichy's Outpost in America

Here is a brief account of that French island in the West Indies which appears in the news from time to time, not because of its own importance, but on account of the French warships and American warplanes which for months past have been immobilized at Fort de France, its capital.

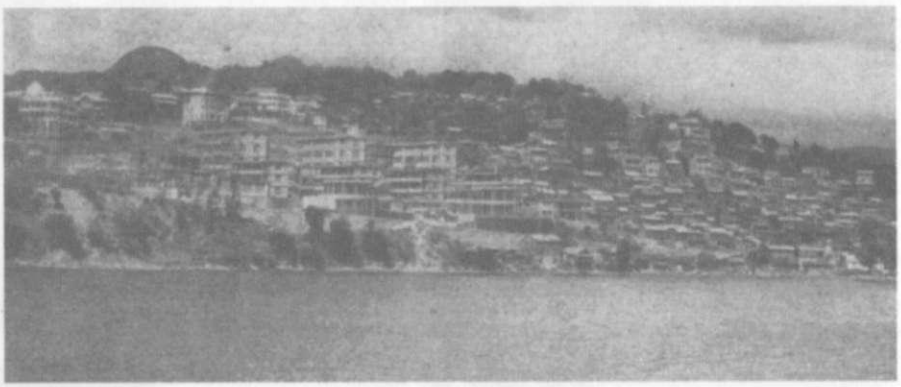
IF France had not collapsed we should probably not be hearing very much about Martinique, for as one of the many islands in the West Indies it lies well away from the main scene of the war. But when the Nazis overran France and there was some question of the all-too-subservient men of Vichy granting them rights over the French Navy and colonies, Martinique came into prominence with a rush.

At once the Americans made it plain that there could be no question of the Nazis securing a territorial foothold on the American continent. The situation was made still more difficult when it became known that Admiral Robert, in command of the French warships at Martinique, had declared that he felt it his bounden duty to obey the orders received from Vichy and make for French ports, which he could not do without coming into conflict with the British warships which maintained a strict blockade of the island in anticipation of just such a dash. For obviously the British could not allow Admiral Robert's ships—which included the aircraft carrier "Béarn," the cruiser "Emile Bertin," and the training cruiser "Jeanne d'Arc"—to go to France, where they would at once come under the control of the Nazis; still less could they run any risk of the 110 American dive-bombers and pursuit 'planes, taken on board the "Béarn" before France collapsed, to be brought within reach of the Nazis.

As the U.S.A. wanted neither to see the Nazis in Martinique nor a repetition in American waters of the Oran episode, President Roosevelt sent Admiral Greenslade to Martinique last August, and after a few days it was understood that a reasonable compromise had been effected. The ships were to be virtually decommissioned and laid up in the harbours of the island, while their crews should be demobilized. The problem of the ownership of the American 'planes remained unsettled; the British claimed that they should be handed over to them since they had been ordered when France was fighting as Britain's ally, and Britain had now assumed the liability for all orders delivered by the Anglo-French Purchasing Commission. An alternative suggestion was that they should be sent to French Indo-China.

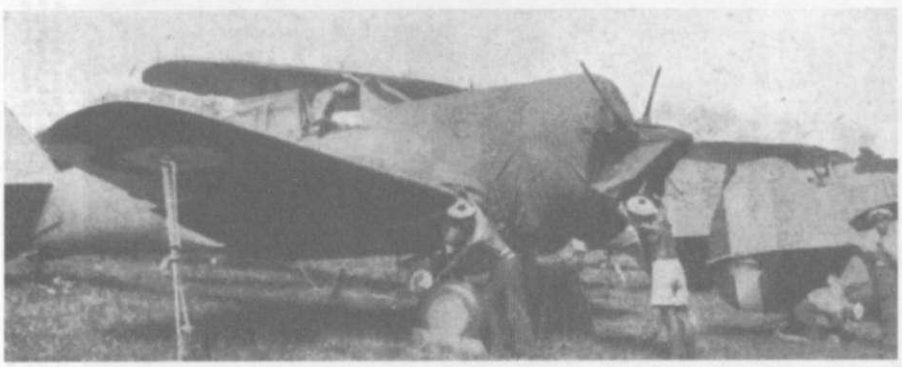
But the 'planes are still there, although they have been unloaded on to the quayside; and there, too, are the ships and the men. So far from having been completely immobilized, there is at least a suspicion that the French naval forces in Martinique are being used to reinforce the garrison. There have been reports that the French colonial troops were practising repelling landing-parties, that ammunition was being transported from the ships to the land batteries, and that pilots and crews for the warplanes were ready in the Colombian port of Barranquilla, waiting for an opportunity of slipping through the patrol maintained by the British squadron and the American Navy.

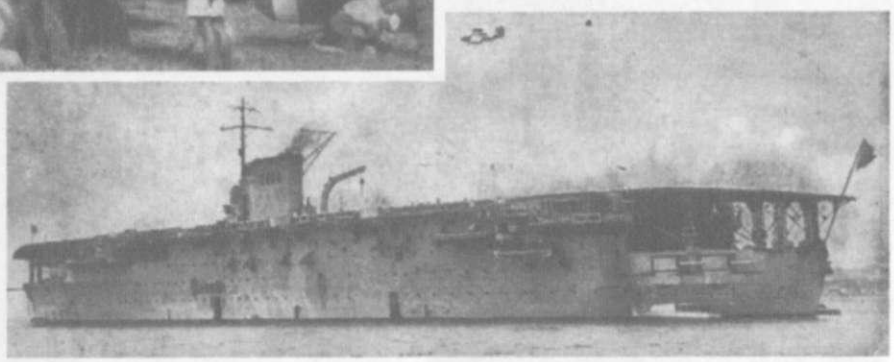
And what sort of a place is this Martinique? It is an island of tropical beauty and riches, lying between the British islands of Dominica and St. Lucia in the chain of the Lesser Antilles. Its area is about 380 square miles, and it is about 40 miles long by 20 miles wide. It was first colonized by the French in 1635, and as the aborigines, the cannibal Caribs, were gradually dispossessed and finally exterminated, the French settlers, the "habitants," grew rich in producing cotton and tobacco, sugar and coffée. The labour for the plantations was supplied by thousands of black slaves imported from Africa; slavery, indeed, was not abolished until 1860. Several times the island has been British, but in 1814 it was finally returned to France. Since then the only events which have broken the monotony of everyday life have been hurricanes and earthquakes, and, in particular, that vast eruption of Mt. Pelée in 1902, when 40,000 people were wiped out in a few hours.



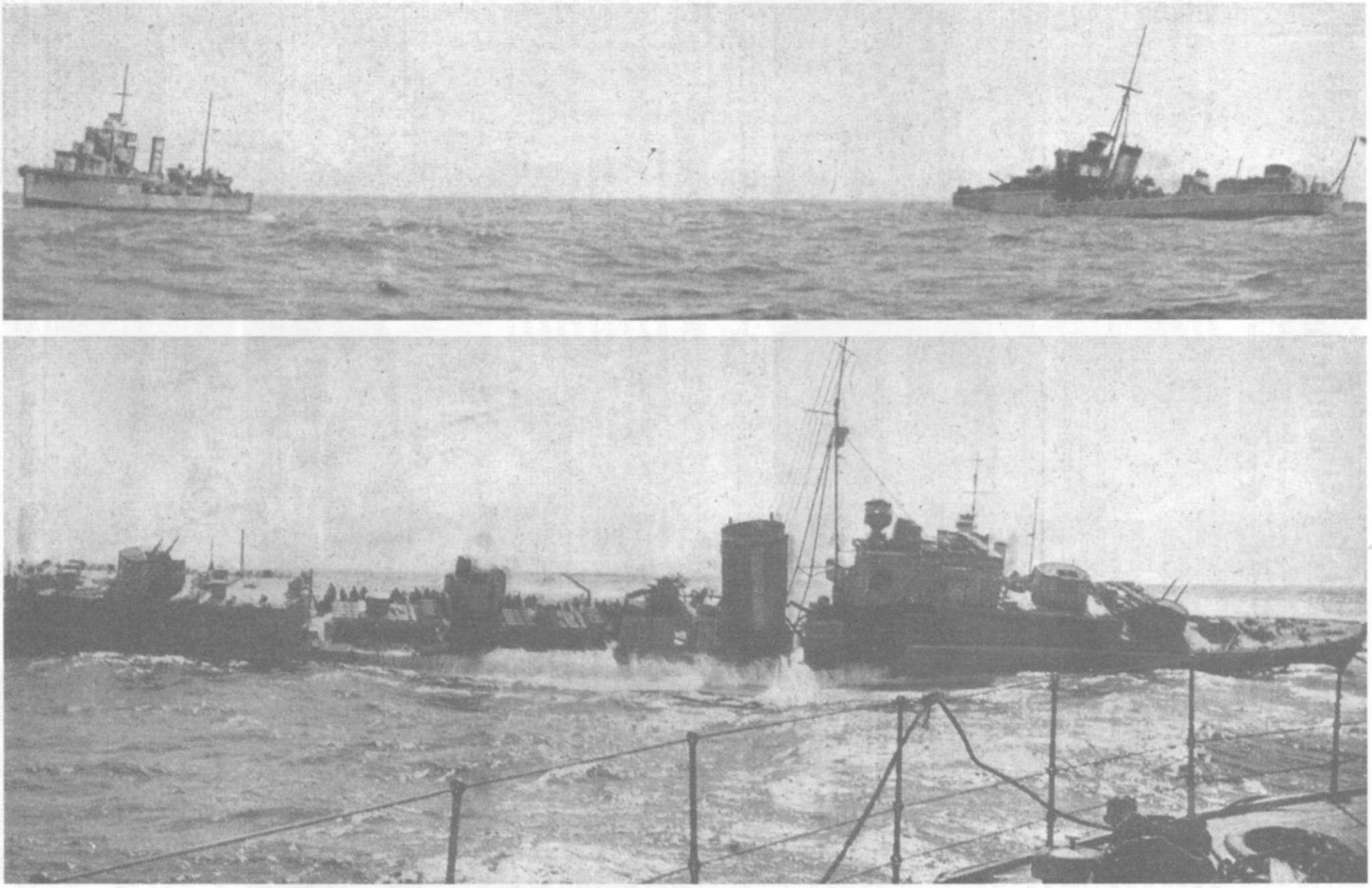
MARTINIQUE'S CAPITAL, Fort de France, rises in tiers of picturesque houses from the seashore towards the mountainous country of the interior. It is the chief port of the island, and through it most of the considerable trade is carried. The population of Fort de France is about 50,000. *Photo, Wide World*

Of Martinique's 250,000 people only a few thousand are whites—officials and their families for the most part. The rest are of every colour from dull copper to pure black, for in their veins is mingled the blood of Caribs and negroes and Chinese (imported to add to the island's labour supply), with, of course, a dash of pure French. For the most part they are an indolent crowd living on a low level of culture in a land where life on so low a level is easy and pleasant. They work on the plantations, producing sugar and cocoa, pineapples, bananas and coffee, or on their small holdings. Rum is one of the chief productions of the colony, and the islanders see that not all of it is exported. They display a pronounced aversion from hard work, and so the island is still largely undeveloped. Like so many of the French overseas possessions, in a word, Martinique has been for years in a neglected backwater.





'PLANES BUILT FOR FRANCE in the United States had arrived at Martinique on their way across the Atlantic on board the 22,000-ton French aircraft-carrier Béarn, seen in the lower photograph, when France collapsed. At Martinique they were unloaded, and in the top photograph we see French sailors busy keeping them in good condition. *Photos, Associated Press, Central Press*



H.M.S. "KELLY," FLOTILLA LEADER, the story of whose salving by a remarkable feat of seamanship is told in the opposite page, is seen here after she had been torpedoed off the German coast in May 1940. In the lower photograph the crew are mustered on deck, while in the top photograph she is waiting to be taken in tow; H.M.S. "Bulldog" is standing by. H.M.S. "Kelly" is one of the K class of destroyers which, with the J class, were at the outbreak of war the newest and best armed destroyers in the British Navy. The German destroyers which, since the collapse of France, have been slipping out into the Channel from ports on the French north and west coasts, are of similiar quality.

Photos, Central Press and Fox

Torpedoed, Bombed, 'Kelly' Lived Through It All

One of the finest sea stories of the war is that which tells of the magnificent fight put up by H.M. destroyer "Kelly" against German torpedo and bomb attacks last May. For months details were not permitted to be published, but now we are able to describe the way in which "Kelly" outfought the Nazis. She is now back with the Fleet.

ONE day last May the Germans published an official communiqué in which they claimed that in operations off the German coast one of their motor torpedo-boats had torpedoed and sunk a British destroyer. But in actual fact the ship in question—the flotilla leader "Kelly"—though she was torpedoed and badly damaged, was not sunk. By dint of tremendous efforts she was towed across the North Sea to England, there to be repaired and in due course go into service again.

It was a Thursday evening in May, and "Kelly" was leading a destroyer flotilla operating against a German minelaying force off the enemy coast. An escorting aircraft having reported a submarine ahead, "Kelly" and a sister destroyer, "Kandahar," proceeded to hunt her. A further report from the aircraft of having sighted the enemy minelaying force presently decided the captain of "Kelly," Lord Louis Mountbatten, to abandon the hunt and rejoin his flotilla, by then passing out of sight over the horizon. While overtaking them another destroyer, the "Bulldog," joined "Kelly" and "Kandahar."

It was now 10.30 p.m., twilight and windless, with banks of mist forming on the calm surface of the sea. A quarter of an hour later a blurred object was sighted in the mist from the bridge of the "Kelly" some 600 yards away on the port beam, and simultaneously the track of a torpedo was seen advancing swiftly towards them. It passed under the bridge, and then came the explosion. A sheet of flame rose above the level of the bridge. The "Kelly" lifted bodily with the force of the detonation, which blew a large hole in her side, extending downwards to the keel. The foremost boiler room was blown open to the sea. The entire ship was enveloped in steam, which escaped with a deafening roar, and in black smoke and fumes from the explosion. Everybody in the foremost boiler room was killed instantly. The men in the after boiler room and engine room remained quietly at their posts until ordered on deck.

"Bulldog," who had been some distance astern, presently reappeared, and, the smoke having cleared somewhat, sighted "Kelly" lying like a log on the water, down by the bows and with a heavy list to starboard. By this time the fog had become very thick, but "Bulldog," with assured seamanship, took "Kelly" in tow and was heading for home in an incredibly short time.

In the meantime, torpedoes, depth charges and all movable top-weight were thrown overboard, and wounded men were being extricated from the tangle of twisted metal and wreckage amidships. They were transferred to the after superstructure, as the sick bay had been completely demolished, and, working in the darkness by the light of a few hand-torches, the surgeon laboured just as in days past they worked in the cockpit of the "Victory." One man he mentioned specially—a stoker, terribly wounded and bleeding, who lay for hours without uttering a groan or a complaint. An 18-year-old telegraphist forced his way through a small hole into the main wireless office where five men were trapped and gave injections of morphia to the wounded, knowing that if the ship foundered he could not escape.

Early next morning "Kandahar" rejoined, and the wounded were transferred to her. Her Volunteer Reserve surgeon did marvels for the seriously hurt. During this operation, while the two ships were lying alongside each other, the first German bombers appeared. They were beaten off by gunfire, and by an air escort of three Hudsons which had just arrived. Later, two more destroyers joined as escort, and in the afternoon two cruisers as well. Repeated bombing attacks were made by the enemy and were beaten off. During the afternoon those of the dead who had been recovered from the wreckage were buried at sea, volleys being fired as each shotted hammock slid overboard.

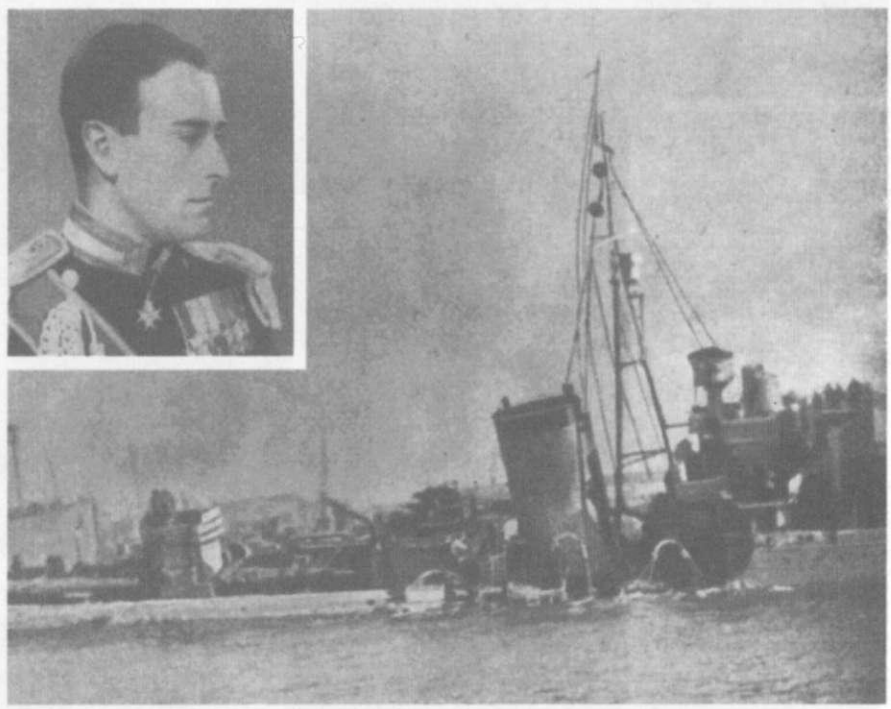
At Any Moment She Might Sink

Saturday wore on, the wind and sea rising steadily. The "Kelly" was labouring with a heavy list, and yawing from side to side almost unmanageably. As her list had increased and it seemed as if she might sink at any moment, the captain decided to send everybody out of the ship not required to fight the guns. The other destroyers had stopped when the enemy made another—their heaviest—bombing attack. No hits were scored. Eighteen officers and men, volunteers selected from a whole ship's company that volunteered to remain on board, were left in "Kelly." The two had repeatedly parted, and further attempts at towing were abandoned until the weather moderated. "Kelly" was then lying waterlogged and stationary, when aircraft reported two enemy submarines in her direct path, and her captain, realizing he was merely a sitting target, decided to transfer his volunteer party temporarily to "Bulldog."

So all through the hours of darkness the "Kelly" lay abandoned, with the seas churning through her boiler rooms. And all through the night the escorting destroyers steamed in an endless chain patrol round their stricken leader. In the dawn two tugs arrived, and the volunteer party returned to "Kelly" and got her in tow. The wind and sea, which had dropped in the night, rose again, and waves swept her from end to end. At noon further bombing attacks were carried out by the enemy, who this time nearly succeeded in hitting, but still did no damage. The whole electrical system of the ship being out of action, the guns were worked by hand, the crews scrambling over the wreckage from one gun to another as each came to bear on the attacking aircraft. The able seaman who had volunteered to act as cook kept rushing from his stew pots to his gun and back again in the lulls to his cooking. He persisted in wearing a large white apron and steel helmet throughout these activities.

The spirit of this ship's company was dauntless throughout. Even when darkness fell for the fourth night and every moment increased the risk of capsizing or foundering, the little band of volunteers remained cheerful and enthusiastic.

On the Monday afternoon, having been 91 hours in tow or hove-to, "Kelly" and her escort arrived at a repair yard through miles of cheering spectators.



Captain Lord Louis Mountbatten (inset), who was on the bridge of H.M.S. "Kelly" when she was torpedoed in May 1940, was the commander of H.M.S. "Javelin," leader of the British destroyer flotilla in the Channel action of Nov. 29. Lord Louis Mountbatten is a cousin of the King. In the lower photograph "Kelly" is seen as she arrived in port with her starboard deck awash.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; and Baron

Our 'Knights of the Air' Learn Their Job

Fully equipped, this cadet (above) checks the various items of his kit with the list on the notice-board. Another cadet (circle) receives lamp instruction. He is sighting the lamp with an eye-piece.

R.A.F. CADETS are seen above at work on a wall of the "Aircraft Recognition" room at their training centre. These realistic silhouettes and drawings are intended to familiarize the cadet with various types of machines. On the left-hand side of the wall-panel are depicted German 'planes, while those shown on the right are Italian.

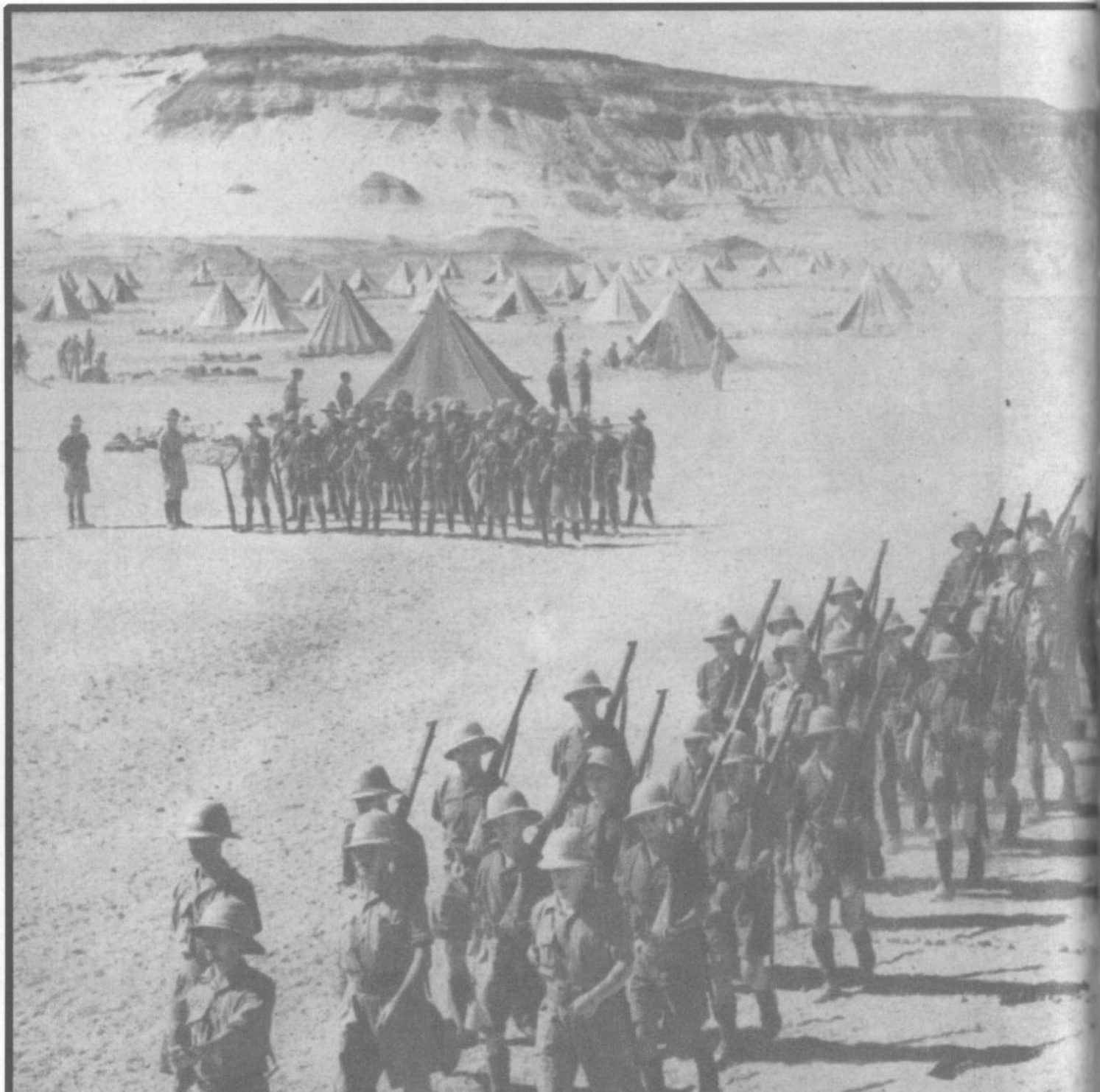
THE NAVIGATION SCHOOL is one of the most important sections of the training centre, for it is here that navigation officers, observers, and pilots learn their job. The whole crew of a 'plane must have a knowledge of this subject in case the navigator is disabled. Before the war instruction in navigation was given at the School of Air Navigation where pilots went through various courses, including the special "N" course. Now such schools are widely distributed throughout the Empire.

Photos, Planet News

Demolition Spells Danger for the Pioneers

MEN OF THE PIONEER CORPS (as the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps is now more simply styled) take their lives in their hands when they undertake the task of clearing up after bombs have fallen. While such work is going on a first aid squad stands by, ready to treat any minor injury. *Photos, Planet News*

Amid Egypt's Desert Sands the Army of the Nile Trained for Its



At Home and in Egypt the R.A.F. is On Top

Signs of Britain's growing strength in the air are to be seen in the vigorous offensive carried out by the R.A.F. and the R.A.A.F. in the Battle of Egypt, despite the dispatch of many bomber and fighter squadrons to Greece. Another heartening sign is the successful cooperation with land forces which is so manifest in both theatres of war. In the Battle of Britain we are holding our own.

AFTER the heavy attack of Sunday, December 8, on London, there was no evening Alert in the Metropolitan area until Wednesday, soon after dusk. An intense barrage came into operation for a time and then there was a lull. The attack flared up again some time later, to be followed by another quiet period, after which raiders converged upon the London area from several directions to drop bombs. A somewhat heavy raid was made also on Birmingham; other enemy aircraft raided an East Anglian town, doing little damage, and also visited places in the north-west, south-west, and Wales. Aircraft, believed to be German, were heard over Liverpool during the night. In Birmingham six churches, eleven schools and two cinemas were damaged, besides many houses. Three high explosive bombs fell on a hospital. An enemy bomber was destroyed in the air during Wednesday night by a direct hit from A.A. guns.

Many Nazi 'planes (estimated at over a hundred) took part in a heavy raid on Sheffield on the night of Thursday, Dec. 12. Bombs fell on a store next door to a theatre, where a large audience was listening to a dance band. The people left the building in good order and were conducted to shelters. Midland towns were attacked again, and other bombers went on to the Liverpool area and various other places. Fire bombs were dropped on a London suburb, but little damage was done. During the afternoon two enemy formations made a fruitless attempt to attack London, but were dispersed and turned back over the Thames Estuary.

In a statement on Thursday the Air Ministry referred to the new shell-guns with which our fighters have recently been armed. A formation of four of our aircraft attacked ten to fifteen Messerschmitt 109s, and over the Channel a young British pilot tackled two of the enemy. Missing one, he turned to the other and fired deliberately from dead astern. The Nazi machine exploded like a bursting shell.

Until Sunday night there was little further activity; two bombs were dropped on a Thames Estuary town on Saturday night. Next evening, raiders visited many parts of Britain.

In the Battle of Egypt, which opened at dawn on Dec. 9 with a British attack on the Italians in Libya, the Royal Air Force played a most important part. It is clear now that the heavy bombing of Castel Benito (near Tripoli) and Benina (near Benghazi) on the previous nights was a preparation for the advance of Dec. 9. Castel Benito is the chief Italian administrative centre in Libya, and here are assembled the big stocks of petrol needed by the Regia Aeronautica. By low-altitude attacks five hangars were hit, and dumps of petrol and bombs were destroyed. Office buildings and barracks were set on fire, and eight aircraft destroyed on the ground. Our pilots came down as low as 250 feet so as to use their machine-guns more effectively. These successful operations did much to paralyse the resistance of the Italian air force during the days that followed.

A feature of the lightning offensive of December 9 was the close cooperation between the R.A.F. and the ground forces. Throughout the day our aircraft harassed the

AIRCRAFT LOSSES OVER BRITAIN

	German	Italian	British
May	1,990	—	258
June	276	—	177
July	245	—	115
Aug.	1,110	—	310
Sept.	1,114	—	311
Oct.	241	—	119
Nov.	201	20	53
Dec. 1-15	36	—	7
Totals, May to Dec. 15	5,213	20	1,350

Daily Results

Dec.	Ger. Losses	Br. Losses	Br. Pilots Saved	Dec.	Ger. Losses	Br. Losses	Br. Pilots Saved
1 ...	8	5	5	9 ...	1	—	—
2 ...	2	—	—	10 ...	1	—	—
3 ...	—	—	—	11 ...	2	—	—
4 ...	1	—	—	12 ...	4	—	—
5 ...	14	2	1	13 ...	—	—	—
6 ...	—	—	—	14 ...	—	—	—
7 ...	2	—	—	15 ...	—	—	—
8 ...	1	—	—	Totals	36	7	6

From the beginning of the war up to Dec. 15, 3,032 enemy aircraft destroyed during raids on Britain. R.A.F. losses 846, but 426 pilots saved.

British bombers lost in operations in November against German or enemy-occupied territory were 48; German aircraft destroyed over these regions numbered 8. In the East and in the Mediterranean Britain lost 18 aircraft, against 59 Italian destroyed. Unofficial estimate for the whole war period gave an Italian loss of at least 290 'planes.

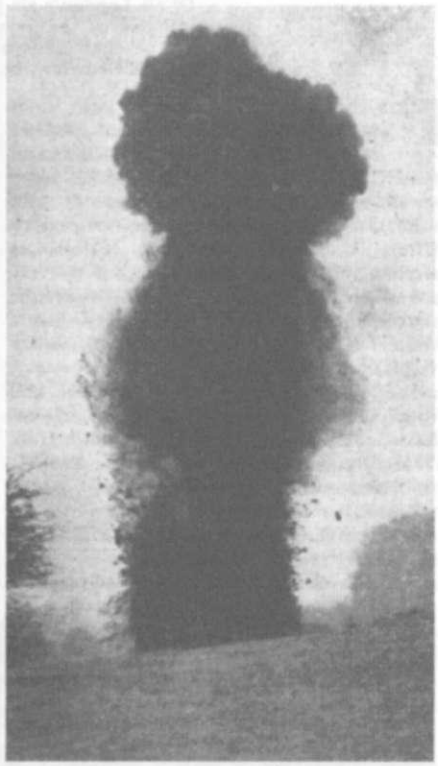
Mr. Churchill on Nov. 5 gave weekly average of killed and seriously wounded civilians for September as 4,500; for October, 3,500.

NAZI PRISONER AIRMEN, above, who have come down in Britain, are in a destroyer on their way to a remote Internment camp. For the damage they and others have done the R.A.F. makes such reprisals as are seen, right, an aerial photograph of Stettin, the great German port 30 miles from the Baltic. It was taken at the beginning of an R.A.F. raid and shows: (1) the flash of a bursting bomb; (2) a bomb exploding close to the viaduct that carries the Berliner Strasse over the railway; (3) a fire caused by an incendiary bomb.

Photos, Associated Press and British Official: Crown Copyright

Sport and Science Suffer from the Casual Bomb

One Nazi bomb, early in December, struck a sports outfitter's shop in London. All that survived was a pile of bicycles, some of which, however, will be fit to take the road when peace comes. *Photo, Topical*



THIS BOMB exploded in open parkland after being jettisoned from a German bomber fleeing before British fighters. This remarkable photograph was taken by a Press photographer from his car while he was driving in a South-eastern district. *Photo, Fox*

GREENWICH OBSERVATORY has not escaped bombs, and the worst damage was done to the dome which houses the big altazimuth, an instrument for ascertaining the exact position of stars. Though the structure was damaged the lenses were not, and the instrument can be repaired and reassembled. *Photo, Sport & General*

enemy in the Western Desert, continually bombing and gunning troops and transport columns. In front of the advancing British columns our fighters carried out offensive patrols and shot down Italian 'planes. Farther afield, Italian aerodromes were bombed, and at night even more extensive attacks were made on airfields whence support might have come to the forward areas.

On Tuesday and afterwards the R.A.F. continued its attacks on all enemy aerodromes in the Desert. Other squadrons bombed camps, dumps, and transport concentrations; as the enemy retreated along the coast he was bombed by aircraft and came also under the fire of Royal Naval units off the shore. In the operations which resulted in the capture of Sidi Barrani on Wednesday and in cutting off large Italian forces, the R.A.F. and the R.A.A.F. again rendered yeoman service.

One R.A.A.F. squardon shot down seven of the enemy during covering operations.

Aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm bombed Tripoli in the night of Dec. 13-14; other Naval aircraft cooperated with the R.A.F. in attacks in the coastal region. On Friday our 'planes bombed and gunned troops retreating along the Tobruk-Bardia road, and attacked most of the enemy's aerodromes in the battle area. During the week-end the R.A.F. bombed Bardia, Derna and Sollum; at the last key-point the barracks were severely damaged and other military objectives attacked. In patrol work one of our fighter squadrons shot down 14 S79s and 4 CR42s; other R.A.F. squadrons accounted for three more of each type. In one week the Italians lost 103 'planes.

Our air forces in the Western Desert attack are under the command of Air Commodore Collishaw, an ace of the war of 1914-18, who accounted then for 68 enemy machines.

The Tragedy of the Temple: a Personal Story

Of all London's air battle wounds few have called forth louder lamentations than those inflicted by the flying "knights of the New Order" in Europe upon the ancient home of the champions of Christendom. Here is the story of its futile devastation by Mr. George Godwin, who lived there when the landmine fell and still resides amidst the ruins.

For the Templars themselves, both Inner and Middle, the unmerited disaster inflicted upon the Temple is a personal matter; and for those whose homes are—or were—in this pleasant place the loss is an intimate affair about which it is not easy to write. The Temple is very old. It possesses overhanging houses that were not so very new when Queen Elizabeth came down the narrow lane to Middle Temple Hall to witness Master Will's first production of "Twelfth Night."

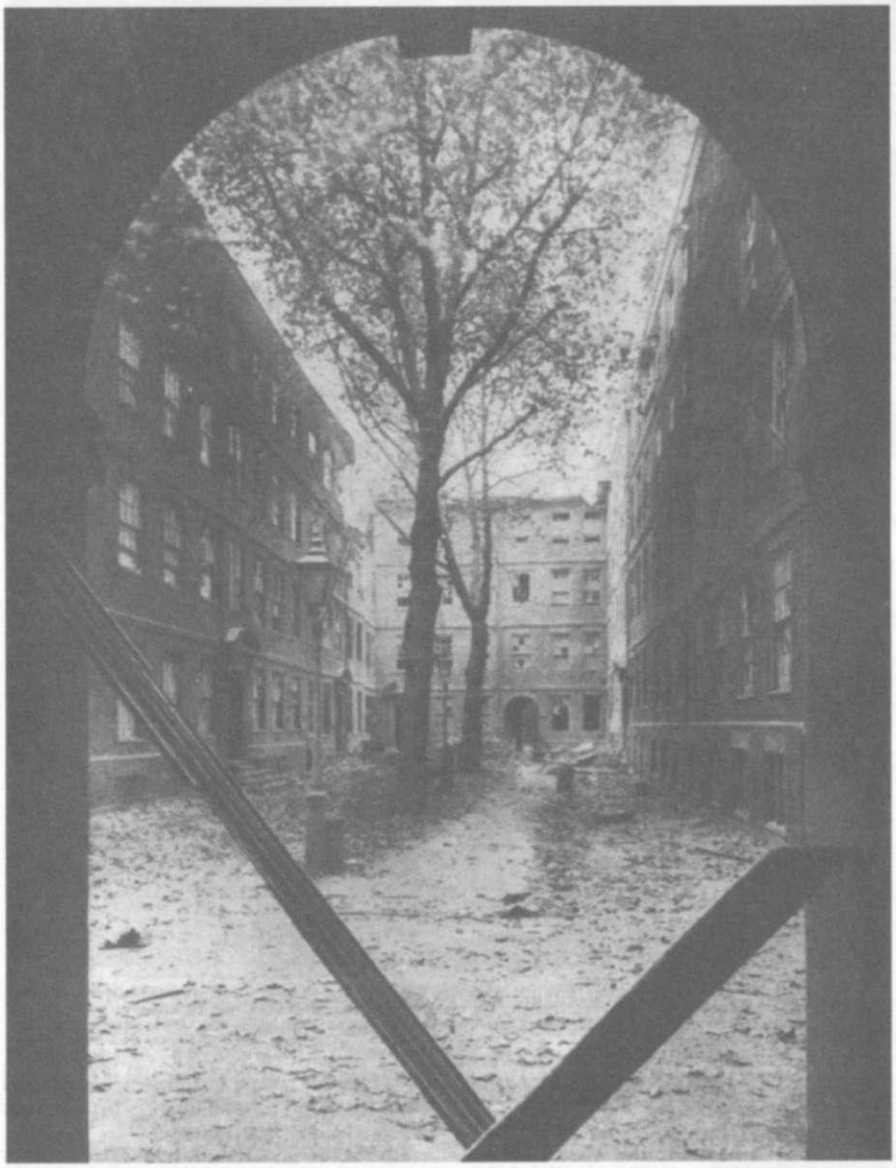
The sister Societies of the Inner and Middle Temple possess still (as yet undestroyed) a Round Church that dates from 1185. By this ancient monument, lovingly restored a century since at a cost of £70,000, we know the antiquity of the place.

The Temple's story thrusts back to the days when the Knights Templars, some of whose bones rest yet in its Church, left the pleasant lands of France and England to defend the faithful from the Saracens. Baldwin II gave them quarters in his palace in Jerusalem. It was said to stand where once the Temple of Solomon stood; hence the name Templar. At the time of the transfer of legal practice from the monks to the lay profession it happened that the Templars had become rich, arrogant and corrupt. Their wealthy and powerful society was disbanded by Papal decree; their London home passed to the legal profession.

The Temple has only two outstanding examples of architectural masterpieces: its Round Church and the Hall of the Middle Temple, said to be the most perfect Elizabethan Hall in London, whose equal or near-equal is to be found only at Cambridge. Yet, despite many buildings of little or no merit, the Inns form a pattern, taken as a whole, which achieves beauty in a way that escapes even many who love it well. Some of its ancient courts see little of the sun, though others are made almost rustic by ancient plane trees and the music of a fountain whose splashings jewel the backs of the fattest pigeons in the world. It is from these ancient courts that the faultless lawns issue and flow gently down to the Victoria Embankment. Under the shade of their great trees one can drowse through a summer afternoon in perfect peace; and at night, if it so happens that your chambers overlook the lawn, you may hear, as the writer has done, the strangely haunting hoot of a tawny owl.

Here, surrounded by its walls and protected by its great gates, the Temple lives a life of its own. It has two communities: those who practise law from chambers and those who live in them. Some years ago, when the writer was a student, there was a popular book called "Still Life In The Middle Temple." It was a charming book depicting the days and ways of the Temple folk. Today, it is fairly safe to say—if such things are done—that the author has turned more than once in his grave since last September.

It was in that month that the trouble began. It began in a more or less gentlemanly sort of way. One made oneself comfortable in a deck-chair, and then the siren sounded and one retired behind brick walls.



PUMP COURT, one of the most beautiful parts of the Temple, has suffered heavy damage from Nazi raiders. The beautiful red brick houses that line it were built after it had been destroyed by fire in 1679. More of the damage is shown in the photograph in page 490.
Photo, Fox

The Inner Temple Hall Devastated

Then it became rougher and the first bomb came down.

That evening was one of those when London takes on a peculiar colour magic of her own. From my windows overlooking the shaven lawn the Pegasus that tipped off the top of the Inner Temple Library Clock Tower seemed to swim in a sea of mother-of-pearl. I often sat there of an evening held by nothing but the quiet loveliness of the scene.

That night there was one particularly terrible detonation. When I opened my window shutters next morning I learned the meaning of it. The Clock Tower had been hit. Two of its four sides were torn away (see page 346). The winding staircase was visible, and outside the door that gives on to the Library I could see the Librarian's notices fluttering in the wind.

Shortly after that a bomb passed right through the Inner Temple Hall. It devastated the interior and blew the stained-glass windows far and wide. It was followed shortly after by another, almost geometrically in line with the two first, a stone's throw from where Charles Lamb was born. A gas main blew up, and a tall, stout house was split like an apple.

Little by little the Temple, always so beautifully groomed, began to take on a dilapidated air. Here and there a stricken building poured its disrupted fabric across the road; everywhere windows framed splintered glass.

Even so, we who have long been about the place took heart of grace. At least our incomparable Church was undamaged still, and our flawless Elizabethan Hall.

Then, on the night of October 16, while we slept or lay and listened to the most

Lawless Crime Lays Waste the Lawyers' Home

terrific din then yet experienced, there descended slowly upon us, swaying below its monstrous canopy, a great landmine. It floated down until its detonator touched the roof of a house where Crown Office Row meets Harcourt Buildings at right-angles, by an archway that gives on to Middle Temple Lane.

It was about three o'clock in the morning that I was awakened by some sudden instinctive awareness. My bedroom is upon the ground floor, its window overlooking the lawn. The landmine had detonated two houses away.

In times when nearly all of us who live in London can tell a tale of bomb or mine, it is unnecessary to say that it is not a pleasant thing to have one's windows, together with heavy wooden shutters and their iron fitments, shot at high velocity across the room in a shower of glass; to feel the ceiling descend, with a black cloud of filth and soot, upon one's head.

At five, shaken but intact, I went with the porter and a warden round the Inns. We were the first to enter the Middle Temple Hall. Here, thirty years ago, I had come shyly in my sleeveless gown to eat my first dinner. Here, a callow youth, I had learned the ceremonial of the mess, one descended from those same old Templars who trounced the Saracens. Here I was called to the Bar.

We had come, three shaken men, into the Hall by an entrance near the high table, and we gazed at what had been so little time before a thing perfect in every way.

All was wrecked. Gone the beautiful carved screen and minstrels' gallery which tradition tells us was made from the timbers of the defeated Armada. Gone the stately perfection of the Hall's furniture: only heaped-up debris and dirt incredible (see pages 490-491). But, even worse, the great gap at the eastern end through which the dawn looked upon the wreck and three numbed men. . .

The Temple, as I have said, is very old. In its eight centuries it has known danger, but never before has it suffered harm. When Wat Tyler led his hundred thousand to Temple Bar and there burnt that City gate, the lawyers rested secure behind their great gates. When the Great Fire razed old London, the last of its flames licked at, but never leapt, the Temple's eastern walls.

Now, after a period many times the total length of Germany's existence as a Power, what was beautiful has been marred; where there was quiet there is perpetual noise; where all was orderliness the heaped-up debris impedes the wayfarer and does very much worse to the hearts of those who feel that this London haunt of ancient peace is, in some very personal way, their own.

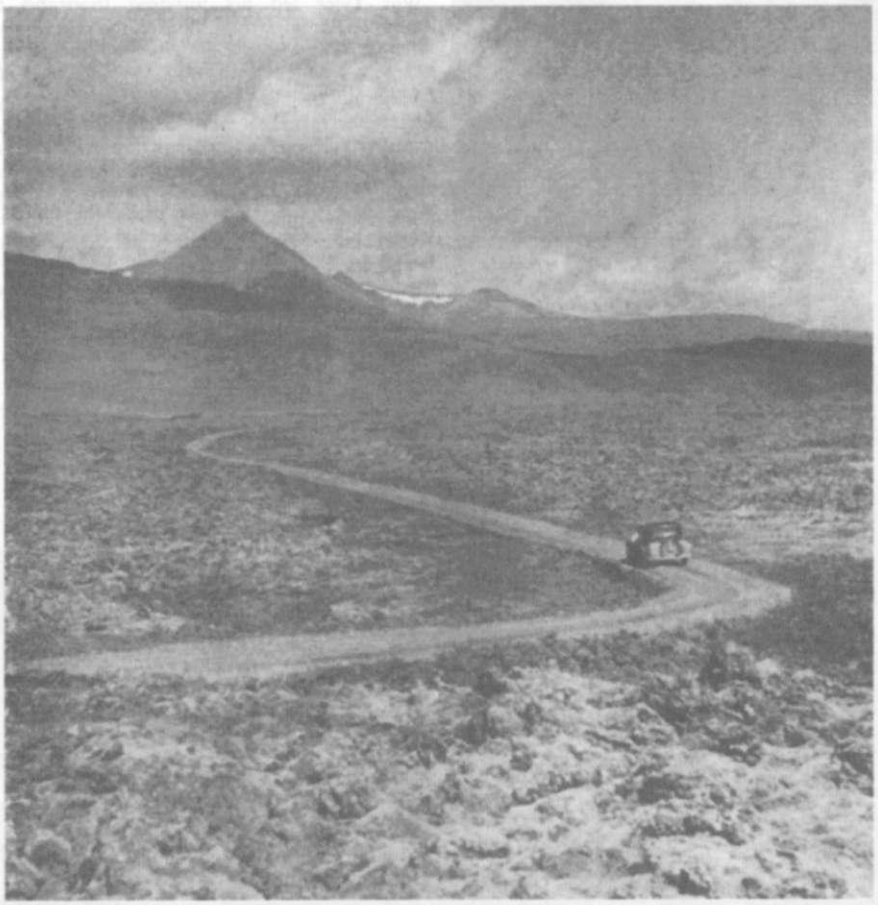
THE HALLS of both the Inner and Middle Temple have suffered severely from bombs. Top is the Inner Temple Hall, built in 1862, with effigies of a Crusader and a Knight Templar blown from their pedestals standing among the ruins. The lower photo shows the end of Middle Temple Hall, struck on October 16, with the gap seen in a photograph of the interior in page 491.

Photos, Sport & General, Fox

Our Men Are Now at Home in Iceland

During these winter months a considerable force of British and Canadian troops are in Iceland, preventing its use by U-boats or Nazi flyers. Some description of the island—so wintry in name but, as will be seen, not altogether so in features and character.

BRITISH troops landed in Iceland on May 10, just a month after the invasion of Denmark—the island's sister State—by the Nazis; and soon after they were joined by a contingent of Canadians. By now they have made many friends amongst the islanders and have come to know the country—but not, perhaps, to love it, for Iceland's scenery is as different from that of the English countryside as are the almost boundless prairies of Canada.



How gaunt and grim is Iceland's landscape will be apparent from this photograph of one of the island's few roads winding its way across a rocky terrain to the snow-capped hills. Judged by Western engineering standards these roads are not of a very high order, but all the same they reflect very great credit on the men who have made them.

Photo, Dorien Leigh

Iceland is an Arctic land—in the winter the seas to the north are sometimes completely frozen over—and there are icefields in many parts of the country. On the north and east great cliffs of basalt rise almost perpendicularly from the sea, while both here and on the west the coast is riven by many picturesque fjords. Yet in this land of ice in name and character there are plentiful traces of volcanic activity, and in the north are several sand deserts. There are swift-flowing rivers, splendid waterfalls cascading over the rocks, and, of course, the famous geysers in the hot spring regions. Geyser, indeed, is derived from the Icelandic word meaning "to gush."

All this is suggestive of a grim landscape, and indeed Iceland has none of the soft beauty of woods and fields. There are a few trees and those few are small; seldom can grain be got to ripen, and the chief agricultural crops are hay, cabbages, potatoes, and rhubarb. As for livestock, cattle and sheep are bred extensively; and ponies, sure-footed little beasts, are still the principal means of transport, although now that the roads have been much improved nearly 2,000 motor vehicles have been licensed. There are no railways in the island.

Of Iceland's total area, some six-sevenths is unproductive bogland or rocky, moss-covered waste, and although a considerable proportion of the population manage to make a living out of the fisheries, cod and herring, it is not surprising that the population of 2·7 persons per square mile is the lowest in Europe. Of the 120,000 Icelanders, about 40,000 have their homes in the capital, Reykjavik, on the west coast, which is also the country's principal port.

It need hardly be said that there was no resistance to the British and Canadian troops, since they came as friends; but there would have been no resistance if it had been the Nazis who came ashore, since Iceland has not even the smallest army or navy, but is a completely defenceless island community. Yet since 1918 she has been acknowledged by the world as a sovereign State, and her only political link with Denmark is through the common Sovereign, in very much the same way, for instance, as Canada's only political link with Britain is King George. King Christian of Denmark, now a prisoner in the hands of the Nazis, is also King of Iceland. Since the German occupation of Denmark, however, the Althing, as Iceland's Parliament is called, has proclaimed a state of autonomy, and there is now a British minister in Iceland, Mr. Howard Smith. The Althing consists of two houses, an upper and lower, and there is a responsible ministry of five politicians—familiarly known as the Icelandic Quintuplets. They form a National Government based on a coalition of the Progressive Party, the Social Democratic Party, and the Independence Party, and the present Prime Minister is Hermann Jonasson.

The existence of the Independence Party is a reminder that there are many in Iceland who long before the war had been agitating for the severance of the last slender link which connects Iceland and Denmark. By the Act of Union of 1918 Iceland and Denmark, as two free and independent sovereign States, were united by a personal bond of union under the common king, and it was stipulated that if after December 31, 1940, within three years a new treaty of union were not negotiated, then the alliance should be abrogated. Today the Independence Party is the largest political group, and it may well be that by 1943 Iceland may have made a formal declaration of complete independence.

Nazi Efforts to Win the Young

Most of the Icelanders are pro-British in sentiment, but there is a very considerable minority who have been infected by Nazi ideas. For some years before the war Germans were ostentatious in their patronage of Icelandic culture, literature, and institutions; most of the doctors and scientists in the island have been trained in Germany, and Icelandic scholars have always received a most friendly welcome from the German universities. Then the Nazis did everything in their power to win the sympathies of young Icelanders of both sexes by sending them teachers of skiing and rock-climbing, inviting Icelandic football and athletic teams to Germany, supporting the Icelandic Flying Club by loaning gliders and gliding instructors, and so on.

There is even a Nazi Party in Iceland, organized on the lines of the parent Party in Germany, and this party still exists, although most of its former leaders have found it advisable to leave the island for Germany.

There have been stories of attacks on British soldiers in cafés and in the streets of Reykjavik by young Nazis who had had more than was good for them, but generally speaking the mass of the Icelandic people are most friendly towards Britain and sympathize strongly with the democratic ideals of which she is the champion. As is the way of the British soldier wherever the path of duty may lead him, he has become not only a familiar but a highly popular figure with the Icelanders, particularly the youngsters. Even the babies, we are told, have now learned to call out "Hello, what is your name?" and "Goo'bye," when they see a man in khaki passing along the street.

Midway on the Air Route Across the Atlantic

Though Iceland lies at the back of beyond geographically and politically speaking, it is on what might well become the direct air route from Europe to North America. From Iceland to the Shetlands is a matter of 500 miles, and about the same to Greenland. This fact in itself is sufficient to explain that occupation of the island by British troops which as likely as not forestalled Hitler in his designs on the American continent. The photograph, left, shows a British "Walrus" seaplane at a port on the Icelandic coast.

British troops landed in Iceland on May 10, 1940, and the island is now held by a joint British and Canadian force. It did not take very long for our soldiers to become on the best of terms with the islanders—particularly with the youngsters, some of whom, as the photograph below shows, have the makings of good footballers.

Hot springs of volcanic origin are one of the amenities with which Nature does something to console the Icelanders for the rigours of their climate. Above is a view of washing-day in this generally bleak and barren land. Another of Nature's gifts to Iceland is the Midnight Sun, which during the summer months shines in perpetual splendour. On the right is a British camp with the sun shining brightly at midnight.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Dorien Leigh

OUR SEARCHLIGHT ON THE WAR

Present from the R.A.F.

DURING the precipitate flight of the Italians from Santi Quaranta a destroyer escorting two cargo boats left the port with the Italian headquarters staff aboard. Bombers of the R.A.F., engaged in harrying the retreating enemy and patrolling the Albanian coast, attacked the destroyer, two direct hits being scored and several near misses. While the cargo boats fled, the warship had to stop and was listing heavily when the British aircraft left. Later the half-submerged ship was captured by units of the Greek Navy, and she is being recommissioned for service with their Fleet. A plaque has been fixed on the bridge bearing the inscription: "Presented to the Greek Navy by the Royal Air Force."

Tank Veteran's New Command

ON December 9 the War Office announced that two important appointments had been made. The first is that of Lieut.-Gen. H. R. L. G. Alexander, who succeeds Gen. Auchinleck, now C.-in-C. India, as C.-in-C. Southern Command. Gen. Alexander, who has an outstanding record, was in command of the B.E.F. during the last days of the evacuation from Dunkirk.

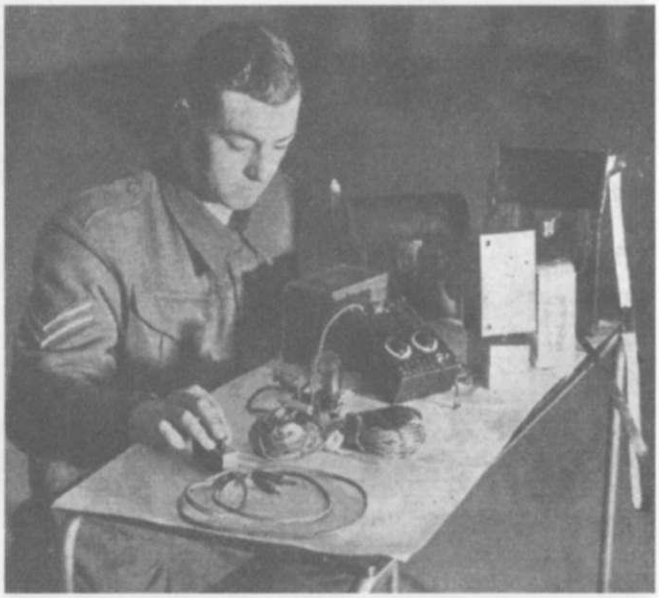
The other appointment is a new one: Maj.-Gen. G. le Q. Martel is to be commander

Major-General Martel's new command, the Royal Armoured Corps, came into being in 1939, when all the cavalry regiments except the Household Cavalry, the Scots Greys, and the Royal Dragoons, had been mechanized. *Photo, Associated Press*

of the Royal Armoured Corps, into which the Royal Tank Corps, later the Royal Tank Regiment, was merged. General Martel, who is 51, served on the staff of the Tank Corps in France for 18 months in 1917-18, was assistant Director of Mechanization at the War Office from October 1936 to December 1937, and thereafter deputy director of the same branch until February 1939. For some time after the Great War he was at the Staff College, Camberley. Here, in a garage-workshop attached to his house, he set about building a one-man tank, using parts of cheap motor-cars. This later developed into a two-man tank, and General Martel has worked with tanks ever since, except for the interval after February, 1939, when, by reason of the automatic system of Army promotion, he took command of the 50th division. With the creation of this new post an expert specialist officer will be responsible for the development of the armoured forces of the Army.

Two Enemy Spies Hanged

TWO spies, Jose Waldberg and Karl Meier, were hanged in Pentonville Prison on December 10, the first spy execution to be announced in Britain during this war. The one was a German, the other a Dutch subject of German extraction, and both had been sentenced on November 22 after a secret trial at the Old Bailey. These two enemy agents were arrested soon after their surreptitious arrival in this country. They were posing as refugees from enemy-occupied territory, and their instructions were to move about among the people, listening in trains and buses, in cafés, and in the streets, to careless talkers, picking up in this and other ways as much military information as possible, particularly with regard to aerodromes, troop concentrations, gun emplacements, and ammunition dumps. They had a wireless transmitting set, and at dusk they were to erect the aerial in a country field and communicate directly to the German secret service what they had learnt during the day. They would then carefully conceal the set, pass the night hiding in woods or an empty building, and emerge in the morning to resume their search for information. The radio set, which was of German manufacture, was contained in a small leather bag, about 8 in. square. Another case contained three 90-volt and two 45-volt batteries. There were two aerials, the main one being coiled ready for use. The men had been told that they would soon be relieved by German invading forces.



THE WIRELESS SET carried by the two Nazi spies executed at Pentonville prison on December 10, 1940, is being examined by an expert. It was not always carried about by the men, but hidden at some convenient spot from which it might be brought out for use at night. *Photo, L.N.A.*

One Against Seventy-Five

RECENTLY a 20-year-old Spitfire pilot, making a lone patrol over the Channel at 10,000 feet, was gratified by the appearance below him of a tight formation of 75 German machines—35 bombers protected by 40 fighters. Making a steep dive into the middle of the posse, he selected a machine, attacked it savagely at close range, sent it flaming into the sea, and disabled another one. He then made off at speed before the Nazis could manoeuvre sufficiently to open fire without danger of bringing down one of their own aircraft. When later he examined his own Spitfire, there were only two bullet holes in it.

Refugee Industry in London

THE first factory to be created specifically for wartime refugees has been opened in London. It is the conception of Mr. Ernest Bevin, and will now constitute an international centre for the diamond-polishing industry, which, until the German invasion, was largely concentrated in Antwerp. The workpeople come chiefly from Belgium and Holland, and are all expert in the skilled processes of cleaving, sawing, and polishing. When their countries were overrun about 8,000 of these highly trained craftsmen, largely Jews, fled to France, and only about half that number eventually reached England. But as the price of cut diamonds has trebled since the war, it is hoped that, even starting with small numbers, this new British industry will flourish. The only other country with a diamond-polishing industry is the United States, and it is also here that the principal markets for cut diamonds are found.

Deputy Air Chief, Middle East

AIR MARSHAL ARTHUR WILLIAM TEDDER has been appointed Deputy to the Air Officer C.-in-C., R.A.F., Middle East, and has arrived at Cairo. This is the second appointment to the post to be made within a month, for on November 21 Air Marshal O. T. Boyd, the newly-appointed Deputy, who was flying over the Mediterranean to take up his duties, had to make a forced landing in Sicily and was taken prisoner by the Italians. Air Marshal Tedder began his flying career in the R.F.C. in 1916, and since 1938 has been Director-General of Research and Development, Air Ministry. He had two years' experience, 1936-38, as Air Officer C.-in-C., Far East.

Communist Push in Bulgaria

IT was reported from Sofia by a "Times" correspondent on December 10 that during the previous ten days thousands of leaflets had been circulated in Bulgaria announcing that Soviet Russia is proposing a "pact of mutual assistance" by which Bulgaria would receive "the Adrianople district west of the Enos-Media Line from Turkey, and the whole of the Aegean coast from Greece." What is termed the Enos-Media Line constituted the old frontier between Bulgaria and Turkey before the second Balkan War. So great has been the effect of this campaign that 100,000 signatures have already been obtained in the provinces urging the Government to accept the Russian proposals. The Germans, feeling that the leaflet was both anti-Turkish and anti-Greek, decided to produce and distribute it themselves. But pro-Russian feeling among the population is now so great that if Bulgaria were to join the Axis there is a danger of severe internal difficulties.

We Hit the German Raider Fair Amidships

The German sea raider which sank the "Haxby" (see page 471, Vol. 3) encountered the armed merchant cruiser "Carnarvon Castle" in the South Atlantic on December 5, and after some damage had been inflicted on both sides the raider made off. The following short eye-witness account is by a member of the ex-liner's crew.

ONE of the "Carnarvon Castle's" gunners, describing the action, said: Early on Thursday (December 5) the "Carnarvon Castle" picked up a German ship and fired a shot across her bow. As a precaution, in view of several unpleasant surprises we have had in recent weeks, the captain ordered the crew to battle stations. At 8.5 a.m., without warning, the German opened fire and the battle was on.

The captain immediately ordered the gunners to straddle the enemy, seeking the range. The German did likewise, and with good effect. Captain Hardy kept the ship on a straight course till the Germans found the range, and were ready for a direct hit. Then, at the last moment, he changed the course.

CAPT. HARDY, of the "Carnarvon Castle," whose ship, as recounted in this page, was hit 22 times by a German raider, but in the end forced the enemy to retire. *Photo, Vandyk*

It was evident from the first that the German had the heavier guns—at least two 8-inchers—and she did her utmost to bring them to bear. Besides, the German was long and low, with very little freeboard, making her very hard to hit.

In spite of that we hit her fair amidships, put out of commission the guns on that side and forced her to tack to port to bring her remaining guns to bear on us. Altogether she hit us 22 times, but not seriously.

One shell burst close to a gun crew. One little fellow, whose arm was smashed by a piece of steel at his gun, turned to his comrades and said: "I haven't let you down, mates, have I?" He was taken to the infirmary, but he died, and he was buried with honours, with others, after the battle.

Before the German got away she fired two torpedoes. They missed. As she disappeared in her smokescreen we saw her settling down by the stern.

We were short of ammunition, so we decided to go to Montevideo, and turned southward. First we saw the "Queen of Bermuda," which took off our 22 Germans from the "Itape" (a Brazilian steamer, which was stopped for the purpose off the Brazilian coast). A number of ratings from the "Queen of Bermuda" were transferred to us.

A few hours later we picked up the "Enterprise," who signalled asking if we needed any assistance. We said "No," and she made northward at full speed. That German's bound for Davy Jones's locker.

I Drove Along Greece's Most-Bombed Road

A vivid picture both of the difficulties to be surmounted by the Greek soldiers and of the spirit which animates them is given in the following dispatch by a Special Correspondent of British United Press, who drove along a bomb-scarred mountain road in an army supply lorry.

THE most terrifying drive of my life taught me how supplies for the Greek Army get through in spite of the Italian bombers. I drove along the most-bombed road in Greece in an ancient two-ton Ford lorry carrying several hundred-gallon drums of petrol and ten soldiers.

The tough Army driver, George Cuovo, had not made the trip before and did not know the distance between his starting point and his destination. Italian bombers had scored fourteen direct hits along the road, which hangs on the edge of a mountain as though placed there as an after-thought. On one side is a bottomless precipice. On the other is a mountain-side without the slightest cover, topped with cloud-capped peaks. The driver had been told to get the petrol through, and he did.

George, myself, and the interpreter packed the driver's cabin, while the soldiers, who were rejoining their units, squeezed in behind among the drums of petrol. We lurched and swayed round hairpin bends without knowing what might be round the corner.

Twice we came at breakneck speed upon bomb craters which seemed to cut the road completely. One of them drew a warning yell from the stoic soldiers, who stood swaying on the back of the lorry—the only expression of fright they had given as the driver swung the lorry round the innumerable bends, only feebly lit by his dimmed head-lamps.

Each time we squeezed through on a narrow strip of mud between the crater and the edge of the precipice, though pebbles and loosened earth rattled away down into the abyss.

There were fourteen of these craters. And as if this, plus the hazards of hairpin bends, darkness, and lack of headlights, were not enough, George insisted on smoking. Steering with one hand, he fished in his deep pockets for matches. Finding none, he opened the door of his cabin and yelled up to the soldiers, one of whom handed him a box. Then a match was extracted after several tries, and George's cigarette was lit.

ALBANIA'S PRECIPITOUS ROADS, such as the one above, provide a vivid background for the experiences of the driver of a supply lorry, described in this page. *Photo, Percy Loch*

I WAS THERE!

During the eternity that these operations appeared to last the unwieldy lorry lurched under his one hand and repeatedly made a bee-line for the precipice, but always came back to the road just in time. I died a thousand deaths on that journey, but my sympathies were with those soldiers who stood among the shifting petrol drums. I was too limp at the end of it to ask them how they felt.

When I think what that ride would be like with only three Italian bombers at work I just thank my lucky stars that I am not a lorry driver in the Greek Army.

'The —— Swine' Said the Nurse

Here is a plain account of what happened to a children's hospital on the outskirts of London when on a night in last November it was bombed by a Nazi raider. Written by an eye-witness, Nelson Davies, it is reprinted here by arrangement with the "Star."

THERE is a children's hospital on the outskirts of London which is one of the best of its kind in England. Many of the children there have never been able to walk ; some of them, tiny victims of paralysis, may never know what it is to leave their beds ; others have permanent troubles which bar them from all the ordinary joys of childhood.

The other night all the little ones had been finally tucked up, some of them hugging their favourite toys, and the lights in the wards had been dimmed. Sleep had descended on the hospital.

Then, in a flash, the peacefulness of the wards was torn to shreds. Coming down almost as one, ten bombs fell on the buildings and their grounds, and the explosions which followed merged into one undulating roar.

It was difficult for those of us who ran from the First Aid Post attached to the hospital to measure the extent of the damage at first. But we had the cries of the children for our guide.

They were not yells or screams, but rather half-choked calls, like " Sister, please, *please*, come and hold my hand," and " Sister, I'm frightened ; please, can we have a light ? "

We went through broken glass and other debris into the first ward of the blocks, fearing what we should find inside.

The moon, shining through the torn windows, gave us our light, and we saw rows of white faces in their cots. On the floor was a figure. It was a probationer nurse, hit by a bomb splinter in the leg.

We thought we had been quick on the spot, but she had already received attention from the Sister, who, on our entry, was walking round the cots, soothing and assuring the children.

The cries had almost ceased by now. There were a few whimpers from some of the younger ones, but the Sister had done her work well. " How many of the children are hurt ? " someone asked urgently. " I think they are all safe ! " replied the Sister.

And so it was. Glass and dirt had crashed down all over the ward, and great pieces of paper-covered glass hung by tiny shreds over the heads of some of the cots ; but not a child was injured.

The nurse was carried out. As I followed I felt a tug at my coat. One of the elder children had reached out from his cot. I leaned down to him.

" D'yer think Nurse is hurt very badly ? " he asked, his voice full of concern. I was able to assure him that she would be soon back among them.

The next ward had received a direct hit, but we learned that it was used as a day nursery and that there was no one—but wait, there was someone there. One little girl had been put to bed in the room.

One of our party was somehow inside the wreckage the next moment, and soon came out carrying a tiny form. It was the baby, two years old or so—and miraculously alive. And not only alive, as we discovered when we reached the Aid Post, but not too badly injured. Her leg was in plaster, following a recent operation. Her little face was white, except where the blood flowed from her two wounds. She cried a little as the doctor attended to her, but only a little.

Then it was that one of the nurses, who had probably never used such a word before, expressed what was in the minds of all of us. " The —— swine ! " she said.

In this page is the story of a children's hospital which was bombed by a Nazi raider. All too often hospitals have been hit, and this photo shows but one of many of these homes of mercy that have been so brutally served.

'We See Lorient Clearly When We Attack It'

A squadron of the R.A.F. which dates back to the last war is now taking its share in the vast work of the Coastal Command. Some account of its operations over the German-occupied ports of France, and a description of a very successful bombing attack on Lorient, broadcast in November by a Flight Lieutenant, is given below in his own words.

LATELY our squadron has been doing its bit in making the ports on the other side of the Channel uncomfortable for their temporary tenants. Cherbourg, Brest and Lorient have been most frequently on our daily lists.

Our attacks on Lorient are now regular news. Lorient, on the Brittany coast, about 90 miles south of Brest, has become a U-boat base and maintenance depot. It isn't giving away any secrets to say that our targets there are power stations, naval yards, slipways, torpedo workshops, and so on. Some of us have been so often to Lorient lately that we must know the way into and around it better than its temporary German inhabitants. Now we know every yard of the country and its landmarks. We always see Lorient clearly when we attack it—at dusk or dawn, or in light provided by the moon or by our flares. And the enemy always gives us a hot reception. All sorts of stuff come up at us—light and heavy shells, flaming red things which we call " onions," and what-not.

The other night the armourers of our squadron were given their first operational flight. Their job is on the ground—to fit and load our bombs. The idea in taking them with us was that they could study what happens when their bombs burst.

" How did you get on ? " one of them was asked afterwards.

" Coo—great stuff," was the reply. " All the colours of the rainbow. Lovely it was from the gallery seat." I don't think I would choose the word " lovely " myself !

I wonder if I can give you a sort of mental picture of how we set about things on one of these raids. An hour before the take-off we assemble in the Operations Room to be told all about the job in hand. Then off everyone goes to attend to his own particular end of things. The observer gets the weather report ; a gunner, who is also the wireless operator, makes certain that the guns are O.K. Then he checks up the recognition signals and the wireless frequencies and sees that the pigeons are in wicker basket—we always take homing pigeons with us. And the pilot gets into his head all he can about the trip and the targets.

Before we leave the ground I test the microphone which enables me to talk to the gunner in the rear turret and to the rest of the crew.

" Hello, gunner—are you all right behind ? "

And then to the observer : " Hello, observer ; course to steer, please."

As we approach Lorient the observer shouts, " I see the target—yes, I've got it ! " " O.K." I say. " Master switch and fusing switch on ! " These are the switches which control the fusing and the release of the bombs. Round just once more to make quite certain. The docks and the outlines of the naval buildings show up a little more clearly. Then I throttle the engines back.

" Running on now," I tell the observer. " O.K.," he says. " Left, left—that's it—steady—a shade right—hold it—*now !* "

He presses the electric button which releases the bombs. The aircraft gives a slight shudder as they go through the doors.

" Bombs gone ! " cries the observer. Down they go, hundredweight after hundredweight of high explosive. My observer is watching for the results. Have we scored hits or just got near misses ? I see many bright flashes. Then big flames flicker skywards like the fiery tongues of monster serpents. Showers and towers of ruddy sparks burst from the ground.

My observer nearly jumps from his seat, waving his hands in excitement. " We've hit it—we've hit it ! " he yells. " We've damned well hit it ! " Then home we go, our umpteenth visit to Lorient on the Brittany coast has ended.

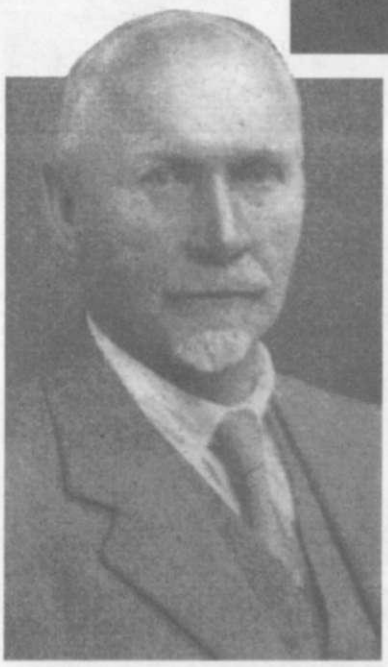
War Personalities—Premiers of Empire

Rt. Hon. J. M. Andrews

When Lord Craigavon died on November 24, his place as Prime Minister of Northern Ireland was taken by Mr. James Miller Andrews, who had been Minister of Finance in the Craigavon cabinet since 1937. The new Premier was born in 1871, and has been one of Co. Down's representatives in the Parliament of Northern Ireland since 1921. From 1921 to 1937 he was Minister of Labour. Like his late chief, he is an advocate of the closest cooperation between the Government of Northern Ireland and the British Government.

Rt. Hon. R. G. Menzies

On April 20, 1939, Mr. Robert Gordon Menzies, of the United Australian Party, became Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia. His rise to that high office was rapid, for he first entered the Victorian Parliament in 1926 and the Commonwealth Parliament in 1934; before, in Mr. Lyons's government, he had been Attorney-General and Minister for Labour. He is 46 years of age. After the general election of September 1940 he reconstructed his Cabinet with the support of the Country Party.



General the Rt. Hon. J. C. Smuts

Since South Africa has been a Dominion General Smuts has done yeoman service to the Empire. In the last war he commanded for a time the British troops in East Africa, and afterwards was Minister Without Portfolio in the war cabinet. His counsel was of great service throughout the struggle, while he played a prominent part in the Versailles Peace Conference. After General Hertzog's government was defeated on a motion that South Africa should keep out of the war, General Smuts formed a new Ministry and ensured South Africa's full cooperation.

Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King

Now 66 years of age, Mr. William Lyon Mackenzie King first entered on a political career as M.P. for Waterloo, North Ontario, in 1908. He has held many high offices and has three times represented Canada at Imperial Conferences. He was Prime Minister, except for a three months' interval, from 1921 to 1930, and has now held that office since 1935. On the evening of Sunday, September 3, 1939, Mr. Mackenzie King said during a broadcast, "Canada has already answered the call," and under his leadership the Dominion's wonderful war effort has grown rapidly.

Rt. Hon. G. M. Huggins

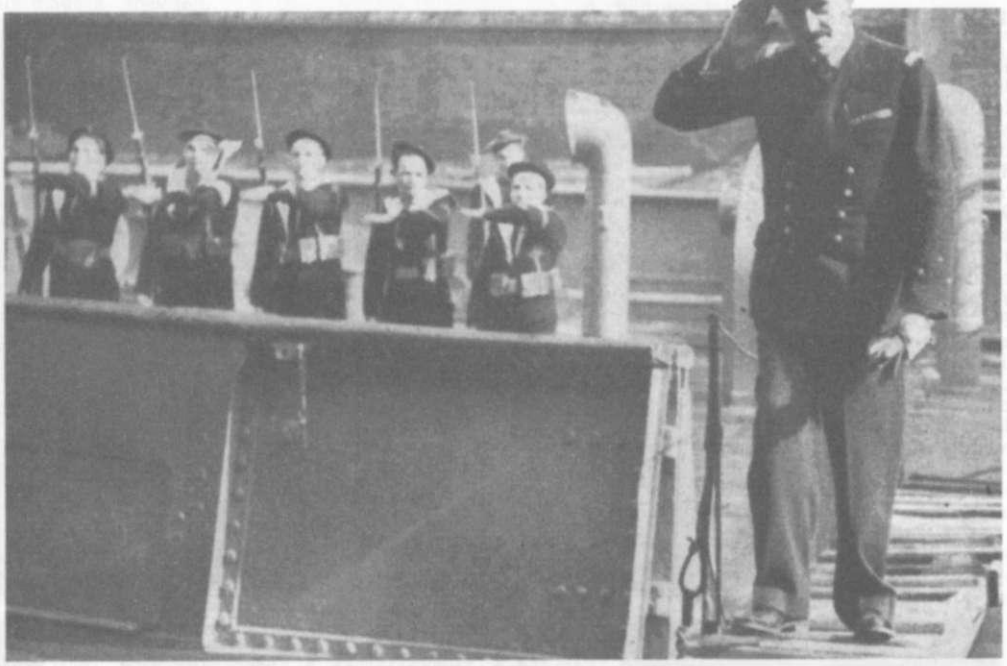
A surgeon by profession, Mr. Godfrey Martin Huggins, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, spent two and a half years holding post-graduate appointments at St. Thomas's Hospital and afterwards was House Physician and then Medical Superintendent of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormonde Street. In 1911 he went to Southern Rhodesia as a general practitioner, and is still a consulting surgeon. He became a member of the Legislative Council in 1923 and Prime Minister in 1934. He was born in 1883.

Rt. Hon. P. Fraser

The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr. Peter Fraser, was born in Scotland in 1884, but in 1910 emigrated to New Zealand, where he worked for a time on a farm. In due course he joined the New Zealand Labour Movement and became President of the Party. He was first elected to the New Zealand Parliament in 1918, and in December 1935 became Minister for Education, Health and Marine in Mr. Savage's Government. He succeeded Mr. Savage as Prime Minister of the Dominion in April 1940.

Photos, Photo Press, Lafayette, Hay Wrightson, Barratt's

Men of 'Free French' Navy Stand Ready



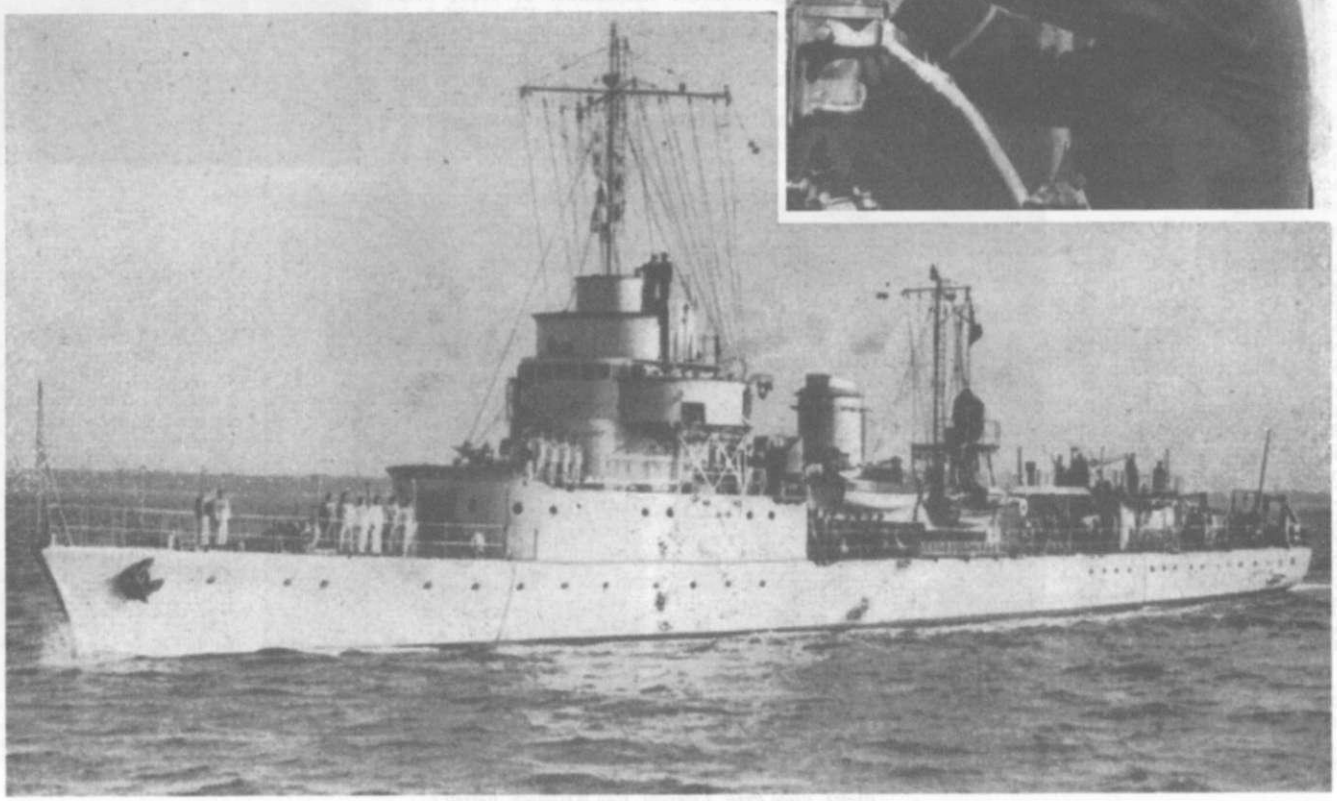
Captain Foch, top left, grandson of Marshal Foch, is now in the French Naval Air Force, and was one of General de Gaulle's envoys at Dakar.

Admiral Muselier, top right, who was appointed by General de Gaulle to command the 'Free French" Navy, leaving a ship after an inspection

Right, an officer of the French sloop "Commandant Duboc," one of the units of the Free French Navy, is seen at the rangefinder when the crew are at gun practice stations.

The "Commandant Duboc," below, a sloop of 630 tons, played a prominent part in General de Gaulle's expedition to Dakar in Sept., 1940.

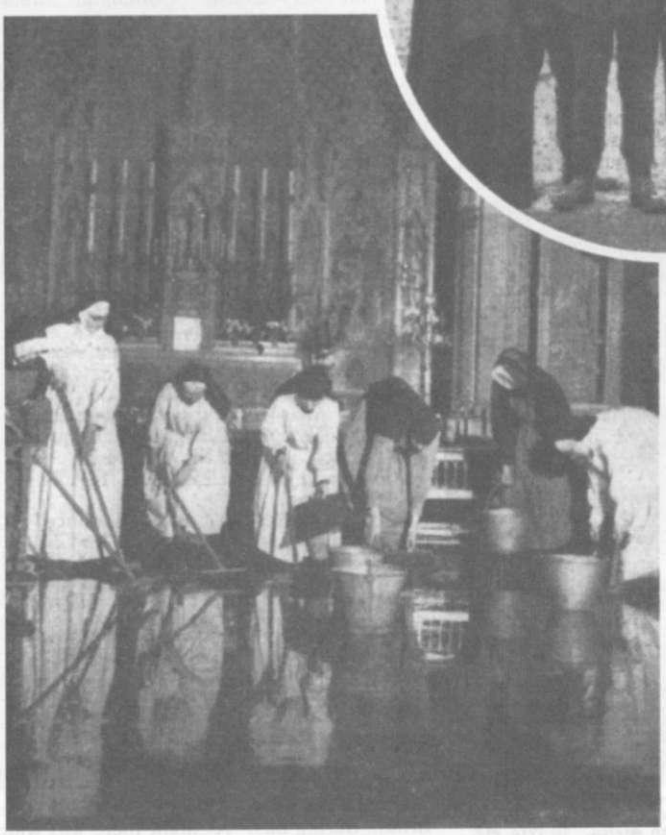
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Topical Press and Associated Press



On Convent as on Home the Bombs Descend

When a convent in the south-west outskirts of London was bombed during the "blitz" the refectory, above, was one of the parts destroyed by fire.

The nuns unperturbed girt up their robes and helped in salvage work. Here, with the aid of a fireman, they remove the damaged effigy of a saint.



Incendiary bombs from a "Molotov breadbasket" fell on the main building of the convent and the fire got a hold before the firemen arrived. Left, the next morning nuns are sweeping out the water that flooded the floor of the chapel. Right is the beautiful staircase covered with debris, but the mural paintings escaped injury. The firemen (circle) who had fought all night to save the building received in the morning a most welcome token of gratitude from the nuns—cups of tea.

Photos, Keystone and Planet

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

MONDAY, DEC. 9, 1940 *464th day*

On the Sea—Reported that a Dutch submarine had been lost in war operations.

In the Air—R.A.F. bombed aircraft factory at Bremen, naval base at Lorient and docks at Boulogne.

War against Italy—British advanced forces in Western Desert made contact at dawn with Italian forces on a broad front south of Sidi Barrani. More than 1,000 prisoners were taken.

R.A.F. cooperated with Army and harassed enemy troops in Western Desert and raided Italian aerodromes. Twenty-two enemy aircraft reported shot down.

During night of Dec. 8-9 naval units bombarded Maktila Camp and Sidi Barrani in support of operations.

In Italian East Africa a Rhodesian squadron bombed defended positions north-east of Kassala and other aircraft raided troops and motor concentrations at Khor Aftit, on Chown Gondar road.

Home Front—No enemy raids either by day or night. German bomber shot down in North Sea by R.A.F. fighters.

Greek War—Greeks advancing towards Himara, threatening flank of Italian forces withdrawing north from Santi Quaranta. Number of important mountain positions occupied.

R.A.F. carried out offensive reconnaissances near Valona.

General—War Office announced appointment of Gen. G. Le Q. Martel to newly created Command of Royal Armoured Corps.

TUESDAY, DEC. 10 *465th day*

On the Sea—Canadian destroyer "Saguenay" reported damaged by torpedo in Eastern Atlantic but reached port safely.

In the Air—Bombers of the R.A.F. attacked number of targets in Western Germany and enemy-occupied territory and docks at Channel invasion ports.

War against Italy—British advance in Western Desert continued. Over 4,000 prisoners and a number of tanks captured. Two Italian divisions at Sidi Barrani reported cut off by British troops reaching coast at point between there and Buqbuq. Some Free French units operating with British.

During night of Dec. 10-11 British naval forces harassed enemy retreating along coast and bombarded Italian columns on roads round Sollum.

R.A.F. continued bombing of all Italian aerodromes in Libyan Desert, as well as camps, troop concentrations and motor transport. Aircraft of Fleet Air Arm attacked barracks at Bardia.

Reported that Addis Ababa railway had been severely damaged by R.A.F. bombers on Dec. 8.

Home Front—Number of single enemy aircraft penetrated into East Kent and Essex and a few bombs were dropped.

One enemy fighter shot down.

Long-range artillery duel across Straits of Dover.

Greek War—Greek offensive continued successfully throughout whole front. Severe battles in Pogradets sector. North-west of Pogradets important heights were captured. R.A.F. again successfully raided Valona.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 11 *466th day*

In the Air—R.A.F. bombed invasion ports and a number of aerodromes. Targets in Western Germany included power stations, inland docks and railway yards.

War against Italy—British forces captured Sidi Barrani and large number of prisoners, including three generals. Advanced elements of mechanized forces now operating westwards and additional captures made.

Home Front—During day small numbers of enemy aircraft were active over Channel and S.E. coast and bombs fell in one town.

At night raiders made heavy attack on Birmingham. Six churches, 11 schools, two cinemas and very many houses were damaged. A West of England town was also raided and considerable damage done. Bombs also fell in other areas, in West Midland region, in London and East Anglia.

Enemy fighter shot down over Kent. One night bomber destroyed over London by A.A. fire.

Greek War—Greek advance continuing along 80-mile front. All Italian counter-attacks repulsed. Greek left wing advancing towards Himara.

General—Air-Marshal A. W. Tedder appointed Deputy to Air Officer C.-in-C., Middle East.

THURSDAY, DEC. 12 *467th day*

On the Sea—Admiralty announced that German merchant ship "Rhein" had been captured by Dutch sloop "Van Kinsbergen."

H.M. drifter, "Evening Primrose," attacked by bomber in North Sea, brought raider down in flames.

War against Italy—More than 20,000 prisoners, with tanks and guns, taken in Western Desert. Enemy retreat continuing. Royal Navy cooperated by bombarding focal points of enemy's retreat. R.A.F. continued ceaseless bombing of aerodromes and troops.

British naval units carried out bombardment of Kismayu, Italian Somaliland, damaging Italian supplies.

Home Front—Small formations of enemy aircraft crossed Kent coast, but were intercepted by our fighters. Few bombs fell on outskirts of London and at places in S.E.

During night raiders attacked Sheffield. Incendiaries started many fires. Streets blocked by wrecked tramcars and debris of buildings. Many churches hit or damaged by blast. London was also raided, as well as Liverpool and towns in East Anglia, N.E. and N. W. England.

Three enemy aircraft shot down over S.E. England, and one bomber off S.W. coast.

Greek War—Greeks advancing along coast and nearing Himara. Two more commanding heights captured in Premeti sector. Tepelini now threatened. More positions captured in Pogradets sector.

General—Lord Lothian, British Ambassador to U.S.A, died.

Announced that Gen. Hertzog had resigned his seat in S. African Parliament.

LORD LOTHIAN, remembered perhaps better as Philip Kerr, was one of Lord Milner's "kindergarten" in South Africa. In 1916 Mr. Lloyd George, then Premier, made him his private secretary, and he was Under-Secretary for India, 1931-32. In April 1939 he was appointed Ambassador to U.S.A., where he died on December 12. *Photo, Barratt's*

FRIDAY, DEC. 13 *468th day*

On the Sea—Admiralty announced that armed merchant cruiser, H.M.S. "Forfar" had been torpedoed and sunk.

Announced that H.M. submarine "Sunfish" had torpedoed and sunk German supply ship off Norwegian coast, and damaged an oil tanker.

In the Air—R.A.F. bombed shipbuilding yards at Kiel, factories and other targets at Bremen, docks and aerodromes in Holland. Coastal Command aircraft attacked submarine base at Bordeaux.

War against Italy—Remnants of beaten Italian army continued withdrawal from Egypt closely pursued by British troops. Several thousand more prisoners captured, including two generals.

R.A.F. maintained incessant attacks on enemy aerodromes and troop and motor concentrations in Libya. During night Derna was heavily raided. Bardia again attacked. Fifteen Italian 'planes brought down.

Home Front—No bombs dropped in any area by daylight. At night raiders did some damage at few points on East Coast.

Greek War—Greeks continued relentless drive towards Valona and reached coast north of Chimara, where they captured fortified positions. Fierce battle for Tepelini in progress.

SATURDAY, DEC. 14 *469th day*

On the Sea—British liner "Western Prince" torpedoed in Atlantic; most passengers saved.

Italian submarine "Naiade" sunk off N. African coast by British destroyers.

In the Air—Coastal Command aircraft attacked ports of Brest and Lorient.

War against Italy—In Western Desert British advanced forces continued to press back enemy over Libyan frontier. Estimated that 26,000 prisoners have been taken, with guns, tanks and much equipment. Eight Italian divisions said to have been cut up.

British naval forces continued operations along coast between Sidi Barrani and Bardia.

R.A.F. continued to support Army by attacking aerodromes, fuel dumps, and motor transport and troops. Fleet Air Arm attacked Tripoli during night of Dec. 13-14.

In Sudan harassing activities continued unabated.

Home Front—Enemy air activity slight during day. At night Thames Estuary town was attacked and many houses destroyed.

Greek War—Operations continued successfully. Important heights, many prisoners and much equipment captured. Fierce battle raging in Tepelini area. R.A.F. twice raided Valona.

General—Marshal Pétain announced that M. Laval had left Government and his post as Foreign Minister was taken by M. Flandin.

SUNDAY, DEC. 15 *470th day*

War against Italy—Operations proceeding on Libyan frontier where British troops have now penetrated into Italian territory. R.A.F. maintained raids on Italian landing grounds and aerodromes; Bardia suffered particularly heavy attack.

Considerable air activity reported from Italian East Africa; Asmara, Gura, Zula and Danghilla among places raided.

Home Front—No bombs dropped over Britain during day. At night there was widespread activity. Many incendiaries and high explosives fell in a N.E. town. Towns in Midlands also attacked. London had short raid. E. Anglian town attacked.